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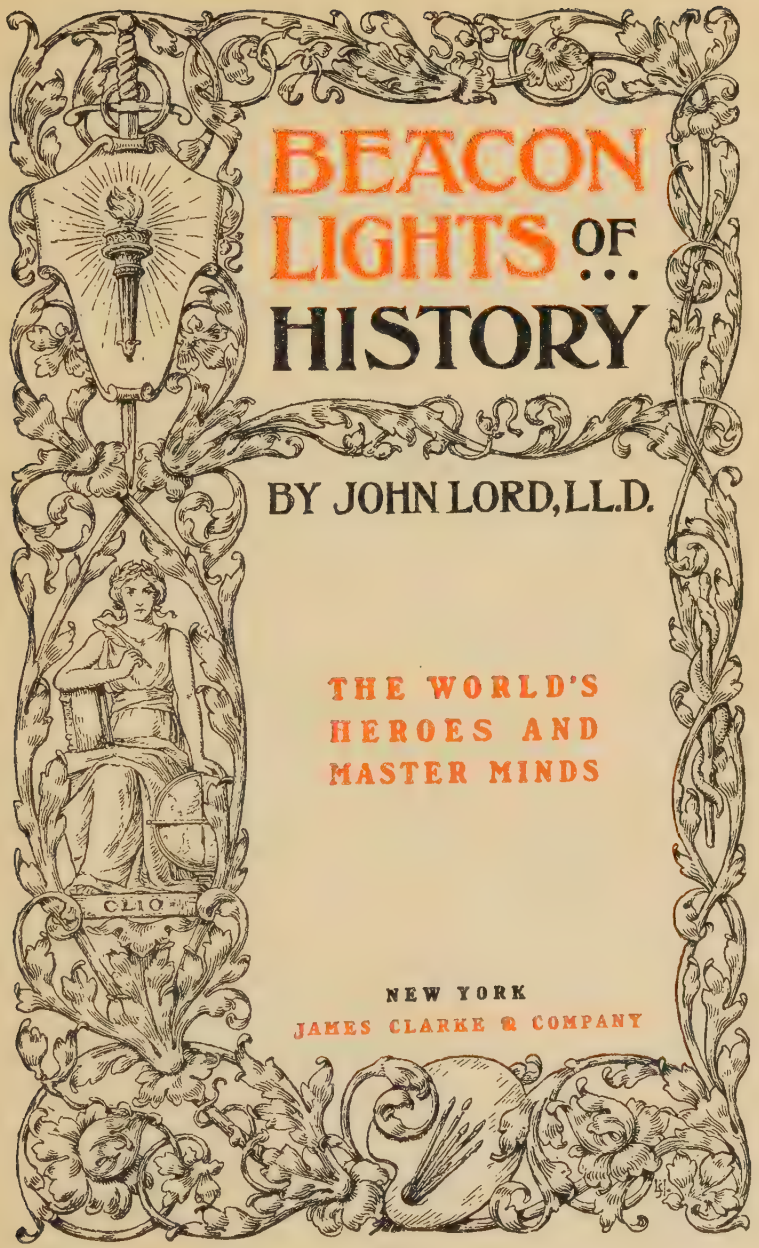
BEACON LIGHTS OF HISTORY.

A Feast Among the Early Christian
the painting by J. A. Mazerolle



BEACON LIGHTS OF HISTORY

BY JOHN LORD, LL.D.

THE WORLD'S HEROES AND MASTER MINDS

NEW YORK
JAMES CLARKE & COMPANY

LORD'S LECTURES

BEACON LIGHTS OF HISTORY.

By JOHN LORD, LL.D.,

AUTHOR OF "THE OLD ROMAN WORLD," "MODERN EUROPE," ETC., ETC.

VOLUME I.

THE OLD PAGAN CIVILIZATIONS.

NEW YORK:
JAMES CLARKE AND CO.

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1888
v.1

Copyright, 1883, 1888,
By John Lord.

To the Memory of

MARY PORTER LORD,

WHOSE FRIENDSHIP AND APPRECIATION

AS A DEVOTED WIFE

ENCOURAGED ME TO A LONG LIFE

OF HISTORICAL LABORS,

This Work

IS GRATEFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

BY THE AUTHOR.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

IN preparing a new edition of Dr. Lord's great work, the "Beacon Lights of History," it has been necessary to make some rearrangement of lectures and volumes. Dr. Lord began with his volume on classic "Antiquity," and not until he had completed five volumes did he return to the remoter times of "Old Pagan Civilizations" (reaching back to Assyria and Egypt) and the "Jewish Heroes and Prophets." These issued, he took up again the line of great men and movements, and brought it down to modern days.

The "Old Pagan Civilizations," of course, stretch thousands of years before the Hebrews, and the volume so entitled would naturally be the first. Then follows the volume on "Jewish Heroes and Prophets," ending with St. Paul and the Christian Era. After this volume, which in any position, dealing with the unique race of the Jews, must stand by itself, we return to the brilliant picture of the Pagan centuries, in "Ancient Achievements" and "Imperial Antiquity," the latter coming down to the Fall of Rome in the fourth century A.D., which ends the era of "Antiquity" and begins the "Middle Ages."

NEW YORK, September 15, 1902.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

IT has been my object in these Lectures to give the substance of accepted knowledge pertaining to the leading events and characters of history; and in treating such a variety of subjects, extending over a period of more than six thousand years, each of which might fill a volume, I have sought to present what is true rather than what is new.

Although most of these Lectures have been delivered, in some form, during the last forty years, in most of the cities and in many of the literary institutions of this country, I have carefully revised them within the last few years, in order to avail myself of the latest light shed on the topics and times of which they treat.

The revived and wide-spread attention given to the study of the Bible, under the stimulus of recent Oriental travels and investigations, not only as a volume of religious guidance, but as an authentic record of most interesting and important events, has encouraged me to include a series of Lectures on some of the remarkable men identified with Jewish history.

Of course I have not aimed at an exhaustive criticism in these Biblical studies, since the topics cannot be exhausted even by the most learned scholars; but I have sought to interest intelligent Christians by a continuous

narrative, interweaving with it the latest accessible knowledge bearing on the main subjects. If I have persisted in adhering to the truths that have been generally accepted for nearly two thousand years, I have not disregarded the light which has been recently shed on important points by the great critics of the progressive schools.

I have not aimed to be exhaustive, or to give minute criticism on comparatively unimportant points; but the passions and interests which have agitated nations, the ideas which great men have declared, and the institutions which have grown out of them, have not, I trust, been uncandidly described, nor deductions from them illogically made.

Inasmuch as the interest in the development of those great ideas and movements which we call Civilization centres in no slight degree in the men who were identified with them, I have endeavored to give a faithful picture of their lives in connection with the eras and institutions which they represent, whether they were philosophers, ecclesiastics, or men of action.

And that we may not lose sight of the precious boons which illustrious benefactors have been instrumental in bestowing upon mankind, it has been my chief object to present their services, whatever may have been their defects; since it is for *services* that most great men are ultimately judged, especially kings and rulers. These services, certainly, constitute the gist of history, and it is these which I have aspired to show.

JOHN LORD.

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ANCIENT RELIGIONS:

EGYPTIAN, ASSYRIAN, BABYLONIAN, AND PERSIAN.

BEACON LIGHTS OF HISTORY.

ANCIENT RELIGIONS:

EGYPTIAN, ASSYRIAN, BABYLONIAN, AND PERSIAN.

IT is my object in this book on the old Pagan civilizations to present the salient points only, since an exhaustive work is impossible within the limits of these volumes. The practical end which I have in view is to collate a sufficient number of acknowledged facts from which to draw sound inferences in reference to the progress of the human race, and the comparative welfare of nations in ancient and modern times.

The first inquiry we naturally make is in regard to the various religious systems which were accepted by the ancient nations, since religion, in some form or other, is the most universal of institutions, and has had the earliest and the greatest influence on the condition and life of peoples — that is to say, on their

civilizations — in every period of the world. And, necessarily, considering what is the object in religion, when we undertake to examine any particular form of it which has obtained among any people or at any period of time, we must ask, How far did its priests and sages teach exalted ideas of Deity, of the soul, and of immortality? How far did they arrive at lofty and immutable principles of morality? How far did religion, such as was taught, practically affect the lives of those who professed it, and lead them to just and reasonable treatment of one another, or to holy contemplation, or noble deeds, or sublime repose in anticipation of a higher and endless life? And how did the various religions compare with what we believe to be the true religion — Christianity — in its pure and ennobling truths, its inspiring promises, and its quiet influence in changing and developing character?

I assume that there is no such thing as a progressive Christianity, except in so far as mankind grow in the realization of its lofty principles; that there has not been and will not be any improvement on the ethics and spiritual truths revealed by Jesus the Christ, but that they will remain forever the standard of faith and practice. I assume also that Christianity has elements which are not to be found in any other religion, — such as original teachings, divine

revelations, and sublime truths. I know it is the fashion with many thinkers to maintain that improvements on the Christian system are both possible and probable, and that there is scarcely a truth which Christ and his apostles declared which cannot be found in some other ancient religion, when divested of the errors there incorporated with it. This notion I repudiate. I believe that systems of religion are perfect or imperfect, true or false, just so far as they agree or disagree with Christianity; and that to the end of time all systems are to be measured by the Christian standard, and not Christianity by any other system.

The oldest religion of which we have clear and authentic account is probably the pure monotheism held by the Jews. Some nations have claimed a higher antiquity for their religion — like the Egyptians and Chinese — than that which the sacred writings of the Hebrews show to have been communicated to Abraham, and to earlier men of God treated of in those Scriptures; but their claims are not entitled to our full credence. We are in doubt about them. The origin of religions is enshrouded in mystical darkness, and is a mere speculation. Authentic history does not go back far enough to settle this point. The primitive religion of mankind I believe to have been revealed to inspired men, who, like Shem, walked with God. Adam, in paradise, knew who God was, for he

heard His voice; and so did Enoch and Noah, and, more clearly than all, Abraham. They believed in a personal God, maker of heaven and earth, infinite in power, supreme in goodness, without beginning and without end, who exercises a providential oversight of the world which he made.

It is certainly not unreasonable to claim the greatest purity and loftiness in the monotheistic faith of the Hebrew patriarchs, as handed down to his children by Abraham, over that of all other founders of ancient religious systems, not only since that faith was, as we believe, supernaturally communicated, but since the fruit of that stock, especially in its Christian development, is superior to all others. This sublime monotheism was ever maintained by the Hebrew race, in all their wanderings, misfortunes, and triumphs, except on occasions when they partially adopted the gods of those nations with whom they came in contact, and by whom they were corrupted or enslaved.

But it is not my purpose to discuss the religion of the Jews in this connection, since it is treated in other volumes of this series, and since everybody has access to the Bible, the earlier portions of which give the true account not only of the Hebrews and their special progenitor Abraham, but of the origin of the earth and of mankind; and most intelligent persons are familiar with its details.

I begin my description of ancient religions with those systems with which the Jews were more or less familiar, and by which they were more or less influenced. And whether these religions were, as I think, themselves corrupted forms of the primitive revelation to primitive man, or, as is held by some philosophers of to-day, natural developments out of an original worship of the powers of Nature, of ghosts of ancestral heroes, of tutelar deities of household, family, tribe, nation, and so forth, it will not affect their relation to my plan of considering this background of history in its effects upon modern times, through Judaism and Christianity.

The first which naturally claims our attention is the religion of ancient Egypt. But I can show only the main features and characteristics of this form of paganism, avoiding the complications of their system and their perplexing names as much as possible. I wish to present what is ascertained and intelligible rather than what is ingenious and obscure.

The religion of Egypt is very old, — how old we cannot tell with certainty. We know that it existed before Abraham, and with but few changes, for at least two thousand years. Mariette places the era of the first Egyptian dynasty under Menes at 5004 B. C. It is supposed that the earliest form of the Egyptian re-

ligion was monotheistic, such as was known later, however, only to a few of the higher priesthood. What the esoteric wisdom really was we can only conjecture, since there are no sacred books or writings that have come down to us, like the Indian Vedas and the Persian Zend-Avesta. Herodotus affirms that he knew the mysteries, but he did not reveal them.

But monotheism was lost sight of in Egypt at an earlier period than the beginning of authentic history. It is the fate of all institutions to become corrupt, and this is particularly true of religious systems. The reason of this is not difficult to explain. The Bible and human experience fully exhibit the course of this degradation. Hence, before Abraham's visit to Egypt the religion of that land had degenerated into a gross and complicated polytheism, which it was apparently for the interest of the priesthood to perpetuate.

The Egyptian religion was the worship of the powers of Nature, — the sun, the moon, the planets, the air, the storm, light, fire, the clouds, the rivers, the lightning, all of which were supposed to exercise a mysterious influence over human destiny. There was doubtless an indefinite sense of awe in view of the wonders of the material universe, extending to a vague fear of some almighty supremacy over all that could be seen or known. To these powers of Nature the Egyptians gave names, and made them divinities.

The Egyptian polytheism was complex and even contradictory. What it lost in logical sequence it gained in variety. Wilkinson enumerates seventy-three principal divinities, and Birch sixty-three; but there were some hundreds of lesser gods, discharging peculiar functions and presiding over different localities. Every town had its guardian deity, to whom prayers or sacrifices were offered by the priests. The more complicated the religious rites the more firmly cemented was the power of the priestly caste, and the more indispensable were priestly services for the offerings and propitiations.

Of these Egyptian deities there were eight of the first rank; but the list of them differs according to different writers, since in the great cities different deities were worshipped. These were Ammon — the concealed god, — the sovereign over all (corresponding to the Jupiter of the Romans), whose sacred city was Thebes. At a later date this god was identified with Ammon Ra, the physical sun. Ra was the sun-god, especially worshipped at Heliopolis, — the symbol of light and heat. Kneph was the spirit of God moving over the face of the waters, whose principal seat of worship was in Upper Egypt. Phtha was a sort of artisan god, who made the sun, moon, and the earth, "the father of beginnings;" his sign was the scarabæus, or beetle, and his patron city was Mem-

phis. Khem was the generative principle presiding over the vegetable world, — the giver of fertility and lord of the harvest. These deities are supposed to have represented spirit passing into matter and form, — a process of divine incarnation.

But the most popular deity was Osiris. His image is found standing on the oldest monument, a form of Ra, the light of the lower world, and king and judge of Hades. His worship was universal throughout Egypt, but his chief temples were at Abydos and Philæ. He was regarded as mild, beneficent, and good. In opposition to him were Set, malignant and evil, and Bes, the god of death. Isis, the wife and sister of Osiris, was a sort of sun goddess, representing the productive power of Nature. Khons was the moon god. Maut, the consort of Ammon, represented Nature. Sati, the wife of Kneph, bore a resemblance to Juno. Nut was the goddess of the firmament; Ma was the goddess of truth; Horus was the mediator between creation and destruction.

But in spite of the multiplicity of deities, the Egyptian worship centred in some form upon heat or fire, generally the sun, the most powerful and brilliant of the forces of Nature. Among all the ancient pagan nations the sun, the moon, and the planets, under different names, whether impersonated or not, were the principal objects of worship for the people. To

these temples were erected, statues raised, and sacrifices made.

No ancient nation was more devout, or more constant to the service of its gods, than were the Egyptians; and hence, being superstitious, they were pre-eminently under the control of priests, as the people were in India. We see, chiefly in India and Egypt, the power of caste, — tyrannical, exclusive, and pretentious, — and powerful in proportion to the belief in a future state. Take away the belief in future existence and future rewards and punishments, and there is not much religion left. There may be philosophy and morality, but not religion, which is based on the fear and love of God, and the destiny of the soul after death. Saint Augustine, in his "City of God," his greatest work, ridicules all gods who are not able to save the soul, and all religions where future existence is not recognized as the most important thing which can occupy the mind of man.

We cannot then utterly despise the religion of Egypt, in spite of the absurdities mingled with it, — the multiplicity of gods and the doctrine of metempsychosis, — since it included a distinct recognition of a future state of rewards and punishments "according to the deeds done in the body." On this belief rested the power of the priests, who were supposed to intercede with the deities, and who alone were ap-

pointed to offer to them sacrifices, in order to gain their favor or deprecate their wrath. The idea of death and judgment was ever present to the thoughts of the Egyptians, from the highest to the lowest, and must have modified their conduct, stimulating them to virtue, and restraining them from vice; for virtue and vice are not revelations, — they are instincts implanted in the soul. No ancient teacher enjoined the duties based on an immutable morality with more force than Confucius, Buddha, and Epictetus. Who in any land or age has ignored the duties of filial obedience, respect to rulers, kindness to the miserable, protection to the weak, honesty, benevolence, sincerity, and truthfulness? With the discharge of these duties, written on the heart, have been associated the favor of the gods, and happiness in the future world, whatever errors may have crept into theological dogmas and speculations.

Believing then in a future state, where sin would be punished and virtue rewarded, and believing in it firmly and piously, the ancient Egyptians were a peaceful and comparatively moral people. All writers admit their industry, their simplicity of life, their respect for law, their loyalty to priests and rulers. Hence there was permanence to their institutions, for rapine, violence, and revolution were rare. They were not warlike, although often engaged in war by the com-

mand of ambitious kings. Generally the policy of their government was conservative and pacific. Military ambition and thirst for foreign conquest were not the peculiar sins of Egyptian kings; they sought rather to develop national industries and resources. The occupation of the people was in agriculture and the useful arts, which last they carried to considerable perfection, especially in the working of metals, textile fabrics, and ornamental jewelry. Their grand monuments were not triumphal arches, but temples and mausoleums. Even the pyramids may have been built to preserve the bodies of kings until the soul should be acquitted or condemned, and therefore more religious in their uses than as mere emblems of pride and power; and when monuments were erected to perpetuate the fame of princes, their supreme design was to receive the engraven memorials of the virtuous deeds of kings as fathers of the people.

The priests, whose business it was to perform religious rites and ceremonies to the various gods of the Egyptians, were extremely numerous. They held the highest social rank, and were exempt from taxes. They were clothed in white linen, which was kept scrupulously clean. They washed their whole bodies twice a day; they shaved the head, and wore no beard. They practised circumcision, which rite was of extreme antiquity, existing in Egypt two thousand four

hundred years before Christ, and at least four hundred years before Abraham, and has been found among primitive peoples all over the world. They did not make a show of sanctity, nor were they ascetic like the Brahmans. They were married, and were allowed to drink wine and to eat meat, but not fish nor beans, which disturbed digestion. The son of a priest was generally a priest also. There were grades of rank among the priesthood; but not more so than in the Roman Catholic Church. The high-priest was a great dignitary, and generally belonged to the royal family. The king himself was a priest.

The Egyptian ritual of worship was the most complicated of all rituals, and their literature and philosophy were only branches of theology. "Religious observances," says Freeman Clarke, "were so numerous and so imperative that the most common labors of daily life could not be performed without a perpetual reference to some priestly regulation." There were more religious festivals than among any other ancient nation. The land was covered with temples; and every temple consecrated to a single divinity, to whom some animal was sacred, supported a large body of priests. The authorities on Egyptian history, especially Wilkinson, speak highly, on the whole, of the morals of the priesthood, and of their arduous and gloomy life of superintending ceremonies, sacrifices, processions,

and funerals. Their life was so full of minute duties and restrictions that they rarely appeared in public, and their aspect as well as influence was austere and sacerdotal.

One of the most distinctive features of the Egyptian religion was the idea of the transmigration of souls, — that when men die, their souls reappear on earth in various animals, in expiation of their sins. Osiris was the god before whose tribunal all departed spirits appeared to be judged. If evil preponderated in their lives, their souls passed into a long series of animals until their sins were expiated, when the purified souls, after thousands of years perhaps, passed into their old bodies. Hence it was the great object of the Egyptians to preserve their mortal bodies after death, and thus arose the custom of embalming them. It is difficult to compute the number of mummies that have been found in Egypt. If a man was wealthy, it cost his family as much as one thousand dollars to embalm his body suitably to his rank. The embalmed bodies of kings were preserved in marble sarcophagi, and hidden in gigantic monuments.

The most repulsive thing in the Egyptian religion was animal-worship. To each deity some animal was sacred. Thus Apis, the sacred bull of Memphis, was the representative of Osiris; the cow was sacred to Isis, and to Athor her mother. Sheep were sacred

to Kneph, as well as the asp. Hawks were sacred to Ra; lions were emblems of Horus, wolves of Anubis, hippopotami of Set. Each town was jealous of the honor of its special favorites among the gods.

"The worst form of this animal worship," says Rawlinson, "was the belief that a deity absolutely became incarnate in an individual animal, and so remained until the animal's death. Such were the Apis bulls, of which a succession was maintained at Memphis in the temple of Phtha, or, according to others, of Osiris. These beasts, maintained at the cost of the priestly communities in the great temples of their respective cities, were perpetually adored and prayed to by thousands during their lives, and at their deaths were entombed with the utmost care in huge sarcophagi, while all Egypt went into mourning on their decease."

Such was the religion of Egypt as known to the Jews, — a complicated polytheism, embracing the worship of animals as well as the powers of Nature; the belief in the transmigration of souls, and a sacerdotalism which carried ritualistic ceremonies to the greatest extent known to antiquity, combined with the exaltation of the priesthood to such a degree as to make priests the real rulers of the land, reminding us of the spiritual despotism of the Middle Ages. The priests of Egypt ruled by appealing to the fears of men,

After the painting by E. F. Bridgeman

PROCESSION OF THE SACRED BULL APIS-OSIRIS

thus favoring a degrading superstition. How far they taught that the various objects of worship were symbols merely of a supreme power, which they themselves perhaps accepted in their esoteric schools, we do not know. But the priests believed in a future state of rewards and punishments, and thus recognized the soul to be of more importance than the material body, and made its welfare paramount over all other interests. This recognition doubtless contributed to elevate the morals of the people, and to make them religious, despite their false and degraded views of God, and their disgusting superstitions.

The Jews could not have lived in Egypt four hundred years without being influenced by the popular belief. Hence in the wilderness, and in the days of kingly rule, the tendency to animal worship in the shape of the golden calves, their love of ritualistic observances, and their easy submission to the rule of priests. In one very important thing, however, the Jews escaped a degrading superstition, — that of the transmigration of souls; and it was perhaps the abhorrence by Moses of this belief that made him so remarkably silent as to a future state. It is seemingly ignored in the Old Testament, and hence many have been led to suppose that the Jews did not believe in it. Certainly the most cultivated and aristocratic sect — the Sadducees — repudiated it altogether; while the

Pharisees held to it. They, however, were products of a later age, and had learned many things — good and bad — from surrounding nations or in their captivities, which Moses did not attempt to teach the simple souls that escaped from Egypt.

Of the other religions with which the Jews came in contact, and which more or less were in conflict with their own monotheistic belief, very little is definitely known, since their sacred books, if they had any, have not come down to us. Our knowledge is mostly confined to monuments, on which the names of their deities are inscribed, the animals which they worshipped, symbolic of the powers of Nature, and the kings and priests who officiated in religious ceremonies. From these we learn or infer that among the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Phœnicians religion was polytheistic, but without so complicated or highly organized a system as prevailed in Egypt. Only about twenty deities are alluded to in the monumental records of either nation, and they are supposed to have represented the sun, the moon, the stars, and various other powers, to which were delegated by the unseen and occult supreme deity the oversight of this world. They presided over cities and the elements of Nature, like the rain, the thunder, the winds, the air, the water. Some abode in heaven, some on the

earth, and some in the waters under the earth. Of all these graven images existed, carved by men's hands, — some in the form of animals, like the winged bulls of Nineveh. In the very earliest times, before history was written, it is supposed that the religion of all these nations was monotheistic, and that polytheism was a development as men became wicked and sensual. The knowledge of the one God was gradually lost, although an indefinite belief remained that there was a supreme power over all the other gods, at least a deity of higher rank than the gods of the people, who reigned over them as Lord of lords.

This deity in Assyria was Asshur. He is recognized by most authorities as Asshur, a son of Shem and grandson of Noah, who was probably the hero and leader of one of the early migrations, and, as founder of the Assyrian Empire, gave it its name, — his own being magnified and deified by his warlike descendants. Assyria was the oldest of the great empires, occupying Mesopotamia, — the vast plain watered by the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, — with adjacent countries to the north, west, and east. Its seat was in the northern portion of this region, while that of Babylonia or Chaldæa, its rival, was in the southern part; and although after many wars freed from the subjection of Assyria, the institutions of Babylonia, and especially its religion, were very much the same

as those of the elder empire. In Babylonia the chief god was called El, or Il. In Babylon, although Bab-el, their tutelary god, was at the head of the pantheon, his form was not represented, nor had he any special temple for his worship. The Assyrian Asshur placed kings upon their thrones, protected their armies, and directed their expeditions. In speaking of him it was "Asshur, my Lord." He was also called "King of kings," reigning supreme over the gods; and sometimes he was called the "Father of the gods." His position in the celestial hierarchy corresponds with the Zeus of the Greeks, and with the Jupiter of the Romans. He was represented as a man with a horned cap, carrying a bow and issuing from a winged circle, which circle was the emblem of ubiquity and eternity. This emblem was also the accompaniment of Assyrian royalty.

These Assyrian and Babylonian deities had a direct influence on the Jews in later centuries, because traders on the Tigris pushed their adventurous expeditions from the head of the Persian Gulf, either around the great peninsula of Arabia, or by land across the deserts, and settled in Canaan, calling themselves Phœnicians; and it was from the descendants of these enterprising but morally debased people that the children of Israel, returning from Egypt, received the most pertinacious influences of idolatrous corruption. In

Phœnicia the chief deity was also called Bel, or Baal, meaning "Lord," the epithet of the one divine being who rules the world, or the Lord of heaven. The deity of the Egyptian pantheon, with whom Baal most nearly corresponds, was Ammon, addressed as the supreme God.

Ranking after El in Babylon, Asshur in Assyria, and Baal in Phœnicia, — all shadows of the same supreme God, — we notice among these Mesopotamians a triad of the great gods, called Anu, Bel, and Hea. Anu, the primordial chaos; Hea, life and intelligence animating matter; and Bel, the organizing and creative spirit, — or, as Rawlinson thinks, "the original gods of the earth, the heavens, and the waters, corresponding in the main with the classical Pluto, Jupiter, and Neptune, who divided between them the dominion over the visible creation." The god Bel, in the pantheon of the Babylonians and Assyrians, is the God of gods, and Father of gods, who made the earth and heaven. His title expresses dominion.

In succession to the gods of this first trio, — Anu, Bel, and Hea, — was another trio, named Siu, Shamas, and Vul, representing the moon, the sun, and the atmosphere. "In Assyria and Babylon the moon-god took precedence of the sun-god, since night was more agreeable to the inhabitants of those hot countries than the day." Hence, Siu was the more popular

deity; but Shamas, the sun, as having most direct reference to physical nature, "the lord of fire," "the ruler of the day," was the god of battles, going forth with the armies of the king triumphant over enemies. The worship of this deity was universal, and the kings regarded him as affording them especial help in war. Vul, the third of this trinity, was the god of the atmosphere, the god of tempests, — the god who caused the flood which the Assyrian legends recognize. He corresponds with the Jupiter Tonans of the Romans, — "the prince of the power of the air," destroyer of crops, the scatterer of the harvest, represented with a flaming sword; but as god of the atmosphere, the giver of rain, of abundance, "the lord of fecundity," he was beneficent as well as destructive.

All these gods had wives resembling the goddesses in the Greek mythology, — some beneficent, some cruel; rendering aid to men, or pursuing them with their anger. And here one cannot resist the impression that the earliest forms of the Greek mythology were derived from the Babylonians and Phœnicians, and that the Greek poets, availing themselves of the legends respecting them, created the popular religion of Greece. It is a mooted question whether the Greek civilization is chiefly derived from Egypt, or from Assyria and Phœnicia, — probably more from these old monarchies combined than from the original seat of the

Aryan race east of the Caspian Sea. All these ancient monarchies had run out and were old when the Greeks began their settlements and conquests.

There was still another and inferior class of deities among the Assyrians and Babylonians who were objects of worship, and were supposed to have great influence on human affairs. These deities were the planets under different names. The early study of astronomy among the dwellers on the plains of Babylon and in Mesopotamia gave an astral feature to their religion which was not prominent in Egypt. These astral deities were Nin, or Bar (the Saturn of the Romans); and Merodach (Jupiter), the august god, "the eldest son of Heaven," the Lord of battles. This was the favorite god of Nebuchadnezzar, and epithets of the highest honor were conferred upon him, as "King of heaven and earth," the "Lord of all beings," etc. Nergal (Mars) was a war god, his name signifying "the great Hero," "the King of battles." He goes before kings in their military expeditions, and lends them assistance in the chase. His emblem is the human-headed winged lion seen at the entrance of royal palaces. Ista (Venus) was the goddess of beauty, presiding over the loves of both men and animals, and was worshipped with unchaste rites. Nebo (Mercury) had the charge over learning and culture, — the god of wisdom, who "teaches and instructs."

There were other deities in the Assyrian and Babylonian pantheon whom I need not name, since they played a comparatively unimportant part in human affairs, like the inferior deities of the Romans, presiding over dreams, over feasts, over marriage, and the like.

The Phœnicians, like the Assyrians, had their goddesses. Astoreth, or Astarte, represented the great female productive principle, as Baal did the male. It was originally a name for the energy of God, on a par with Baal. In one of her aspects she represented the moon; but more commonly she was the representative of the female principle in Nature, and was connected more or less with voluptuous rites, — the equivalent of Aphrodite, or Venus. Tanith also was a noted female deity, and was worshipped at Carthage and Cyprus by the Phœnician settlers. The name is associated, according to Gesenius, with the Egyptian goddess Nut, and with the Grecian Artemis the huntress.

An important thing to be observed of these various deities is that they do not uniformly represent the same power. Thus Baal, the Phœnician sun-god, was made by the Greeks and Romans equivalent to Zeus, or Jupiter, the god of thunder and storms. Apollo, the sun-god of the Greeks, was not so powerful as Zeus, the god of the atmosphere; while in Assyria

and Phœnicia the sun-god was the greater deity. In Babylonia, Shamas was a sun-god as well as Bel; and Bel again was the god of the heavens, like Zeus.

While Zeus was the supreme deity in the Greek mythology, rather than Apollo the sun, it seems that on the whole the sun was the prominent and the most commonly worshipped deity of all the Oriental nations, as being the most powerful force in Nature. Behind the sun, however, there was supposed to be an indefinite creative power, whose form was not represented, worshipped in no particular temple by the esoteric few who were his votaries, and called the "Father of all the gods," "the Ancient of days," reigning supreme over them all. This indefinite conception of the Jehovah of the Hebrews seems to me the last flickering light of the primitive revelation, shining in the souls of the most enlightened of the Pagan worshippers, including perhaps the greatest of the monarchs, who were priests as well as kings.

The most distinguishing feature in the worship of all the gods of antiquity, whether among Egyptians, or Assyrians, or Babylonians, or Phœnicians, or Greeks, or Romans, is that of oblations and sacrifices. It was even a peculiarity of the old Jewish religion, as well as that of China and India. These oblations and sacrifices were sometimes offered to the deity, whatever his form or name, as an expiation for sin, of which

the soul is conscious in all ages and countries; sometimes to obtain divine favor, as in military expeditions, or to secure any object dearest to the heart, such as health, prosperity, or peace; sometimes to propitiate the deity in order to avert the calamities following his supposed wrath or vengeance. The oblations were usually in the form of wine, honey, or the fruits of the earth, which were supposed to be necessary for the nourishment of the gods, especially in Greece. The sacrifices were generally of oxen, sheep, and goats, the most valued and precious of human property in primitive times, for those old heathen never offered to their deities that which cost them nothing, but rather that which was dearest to them. Sometimes, especially in Phœnicia, human beings were offered in sacrifice, the most repulsive peculiarity of polytheism. But the instincts of humanity generally kept men from rites so revolting. Christianity, as one of its distinguishing features, abolished all forms of outward sacrifice, as superstitious and useless. The sacrifices pleasing to God are a broken spirit, as revealed to David and Isaiah amid all the ceremonies and ritualism of Jewish worship, and still more to Paul and Peter when the new dispensation was fully declared. The only sacrifice which Christ enjoined was self-sacrifice, supreme devotion to a spiritual and unseen and supreme God, and to his children: as the Christ took upon himself the

After the painting by Henri Motte

DRIVING SACRIFICIAL VICTIMS INTO THE FIERY MOUTH OF BAAL

form of a man, suffering evil all his days, and finally even an ignominious death, in obedience to his Father's will, that the world might be saved by his own self-sacrifice.

With sacrifices as an essential feature of all the ancient religions, if we except that of Persia in the time of Zoroaster, there was need of an officiating priesthood. The priests in all countries sought to gain power and influence, and made themselves an exclusive caste, more or less powerful as circumstances favored their usurpations. The priestly caste became a terrible power in Egypt and India, where the people, it would seem, were most susceptible to religious impressions, were most docile and most ignorant, and had in constant view the future welfare of their souls. In China, where there was scarcely any religion at all, this priestly power was unknown; and it was especially weak among the Greeks, who had no fear of the future, and who worshipped beauty and grace rather than a spiritual god. Sacerdotalism entered into Christianity when it became corrupted by the lust of dominion and power, and with great force ruled the Christian world in times of ignorance and superstition. It is sad to think that the decline of sacerdotalism is associated with the growth of infidelity and religious indifference, showing how few worship God in spirit and in truth even in Christian countries. Yet even

that reaction is humanly natural; and as it so surely follows upon epochs of priestcraft, it may be a part of the divine process of arousing men to the evils of superstition.

Among all nations where polytheism prevailed, idolatry became a natural sequence, — that is, the worship of animals and of graven images, at first as symbols of the deities that were worshipped, generally the sun, moon, and stars, and the elements of Nature, like fire, water, and air. But the symbols of divine power, as degeneracy increased and ignorance set in, were in succession worshipped as deities, as in India and Africa at the present day. This is the lowest form of religion, and the most repulsive and degraded which has prevailed in the world, — showing the enormous difference between the primitive faiths and the worship which succeeded, growing more and more hideous with the progress of ages, until the fulness of time arrived when God sent reformers among the debased people, more or less supernaturally inspired, to declare new truth, and even to revive the knowledge of the old in danger of being utterly lost.

It is a pleasant thing to remember that the religions thus far treated, as known to the Jews, and by which they were more or less contaminated, have all passed away with the fall of empires and the spread of divine truth; and they never again can be revived in

the countries where they flourished. Mohammedanism, a monotheistic religion, has taken their place, and driven the ancient idols to the moles and the bats; and where Mohammedanism has failed to extirpate ancient idolatries, Christianity in some form has come in and dethroned them forever.

There was one form of religion with which the Jews came in contact which was comparatively pure; and this was the religion of Persia, the loftiest form of all Pagan beliefs.

The Persians were an important branch of the Iranian family. "The Iranians were the dominant race throughout the entire tract lying between the Suliman mountains and the Pamir steppe on the one hand, and the great Mesopotamian valley on the other." It was a region of great extremes of temperature, — the summers being hot, and the winters piercingly cold. A great part of this region is an arid and frightful desert; but the more favored portions are extremely fertile. In this country the Iranians settled at a very early period, probably 2500 B. C., about the time the Hindus emigrated from Central Asia to the banks of the Indus. Both Iranians and Hindus belonged to the great Aryan or Indo-European race, whose original settlements were on the high table-lands northeast of Samarkand, in the modern Bokhara, watered by

the Oxus, or Amon River. From these rugged regions east of the Caspian Sea, where the means of subsistence are difficult to be obtained, the Aryans emigrated to India on the southeast, to Iran on the southwest, to Europe on the west, — all speaking substantially the same language.

Of those who settled in Iran, the Persians were the most prominent, — a brave, hardy, and adventurous people, warlike in their habits, and moral in their conduct. They were a pastoral rather than a nomadic people, and gloried in their horses and cattle. They had great skill as archers and horsemen, and furnished the best cavalry among the ancients. They lived in fixed habitations, and their houses had windows and fireplaces; but they were doomed to a perpetual struggle with a severe and uncertain climate, and a soil which required ceaseless diligence. "The whole plateau of Iran," says Johnson, "was suggestive of the war of elements, — a country of great contrasts of fertility and desolation, — snowy ranges of mountains, salt deserts, and fields of beauty lying in close proximity."

The early Persians are represented as having oval faces, raised features, well-arched eyebrows, and large dark eyes, now soft as the gazelle's, now flashing with quick insight. Such a people were extremely receptive of modes and fashions, — the aptest learners as

well as the boldest adventurers; not patient in study nor skilful to invent, but swift to seize and appropriate, terrible breakers-up of old religious spells. They dissolved the old material civilization of Cushite and Turanian origin. What passion for vast conquests! "These rugged tribes, devoted to their chiefs, led by Cyrus from their herds and hunting-grounds to startle the pampered Lydians with their spare diet and clothing of skins; living on what they could get, strangers to wine and wassail, schooled in manly exercises, cleanly even to superstition, loyal to age and filial duties; with a manly pride of personal independence that held a debt the next worst thing to a lie; their fondness for social graces, their feudal dignities, their chiefs giving counsel to the king even while submissive to his person, esteeming prowess before praying; their strong ambition, scorning those who scorned toil." Artaxerxes wore upon his person the worth of twelve thousand talents, yet shared the hardships of his army in the march, carrying quiver and shield, leading the way to the steepest places, and stimulating the hearts of his soldiers by walking twenty-five miles a day.

There was much that is interesting about the ancient Persians. All the old authorities, especially Herodotus, testify to the comparative purity of their lives, to their love of truth, to their heroism in war, to the

simplicity of their habits, to their industry and thrift in battling sterility of soil and the elements of Nature, to their love of agricultural pursuits, to kindness towards women and slaves, and above all other things to a strong personality of character which implied a powerful will. The early Persians chose the bravest and most capable of their nobles for kings, and these kings were mild and merciful. Xenophon makes Cyrus the ideal of a king, — the incarnation of sweetness and light, conducting war with a magnanimity unknown to the ancient nations, dismissing prisoners, forgiving foes, freeing slaves, and winning all hearts by a true nobility of nature. He was a reformer of barbarous methods of war, and as pure in morals as he was powerful in war. In short, he had all those qualities which we admire in the chivalric heroes of the Middle Ages.

There was developed among this primitive and virtuous people a religion essentially different from that of Assyria and Egypt, with which is associated the name of Zoroaster, or Zarathushtra. Who this extraordinary personage was, and when he lived, it is not easy to determine. Some suppose that he did not live at all. It is most probable that he lived in Bactria from 1000 to 1500 B. C.; but all about him is involved in hopeless obscurity.

The Zend-Avesta, or the sacred books of the Per-

sians, are mostly hymns, prayers, and invocations addressed to various deities, among whom Ormazd was regarded as supreme. These poems were first made known to European scholars by Anquetil du Perron, an enthusiastic traveller, a little more than one hundred years ago, and before the laws of Menu were translated by Sir William Jones. What we know about the religion of Persia is chiefly derived from the Zend-Avesta. *Zend* is the interpretation of the Avesta. The oldest part of these poems is called the Gâthâs, supposed to have been composed by Zoroaster about the time of Moses.

As all information about Zoroaster personally is unsatisfactory, I proceed to speak of the religion which he is supposed to have given to the Iranians, according to Dr. Martin Haug, the great authority on this subject.

Its peculiar feature was dualism, — two original uncreated principles; one good, the other evil. Both principles were real persons, possessed of will, intelligence, power, consciousness, engaged from all eternity in perpetual contest. The good power was called Ahura-Mazda, and the evil power was called Angro-Mainyus. Ahura-Mazda means the "Much-knowing spirit," or the All-wise, the All-bountiful, who stood at the head of all that is beneficent in the universe, — "the creator of life," who made the celestial bodies

and the earth, and from whom came all good to man and everlasting happiness. Angro-Mainyus means the black or dark intelligence, the creator of all that is evil, both moral and physical. He had power to blast the earth with barrenness, to produce earthquakes and storms, to inflict disease and death, destroy flocks and the fruits of the earth, excite wars and tumults; in short, to send every form of evil on mankind. Ahura-Mazda had no control over this Power of evil; all he could do was to baffle him.

These two deities who divided the universe between them had each subordinate spirits or genii, who did their will, and assisted in the government of the universe, — corresponding to our idea of angels and demons.

Neither of these supreme deities was represented by the early Iranians under material forms; but in process of time corruption set in, and Magism, or the worship of the elements of Nature, became general. The elements which were worshipped were fire, air, earth, and water. Personal gods, temples, shrines, and images were rejected. But the most common form of worship was that of fire, in Mithra, the genius of light, early identified with the sun. Hence, practically, the supreme god of the Persians was the same that was worshipped in Assyria and Egypt and India, — the sun, under various names; with this difference,

that in Persia there were no temples erected to him, nor were there graven images of him. With the sun was associated a supreme power that presided over the universe, benignant and eternal. Fire itself in its pure universality was more to the Iranians than any form. "From the sun," says the Avesta, "are all things sought that can be desired." To fire, the Persian kings addressed their prayers. Fire, or the sun, was in the early times a symbol of the supreme Power, rather than the Power itself, since the sun was created by Ahura-Mazda (Ormazd). It was to him that Zoroaster addressed his prayers, as recorded in the Gâthâs. "I worship," said he, "the Creator of all things, Ahura-Mazda, full of light. . . . Teach thou me, Ahura-Mazda, out of thyself, from heaven by thy mouth, whereby the world first arose." Again, from the Khorda-Avesta we read: "In the name of God, the giver, forgiver, rich in love, praise be to the name of Ormazd, who always was, always is, and always will be; from whom alone is derived rule." From these and other passages we infer that the religion of the Iranians was monotheistic. And yet the sun also was worshipped under the name of Mithra. Says Zoroaster: "I invoke Mithra, the lofty, the immortal, the pure, the sun, the ruler, the eye of Ormazd." It would seem from this that the sun was identified with the Supreme Being. There was no other power than the sun which was

worshipped. There was no multitude of gods, nothing like polytheism, such as existed in Egypt. The Iranians believed in one supreme, eternal God, who created all things, beneficent and all-wise; yet this supreme power was worshipped under the symbol of the sun, although the sun was created by him. This confounding the sun with a supreme and intelligent being makes the Iranian religion indefinite, and hard to be comprehended; but compared with the polytheism of Egypt and Babylon, it is much higher and purer. We see in it no degrading rites, no offensive sacerdotalism, no caste, no worship of animals or images; all is spiritual and elevated, but little inferior to the religion of the Hebrews. In the Zend-Avesta we find no doctrines; but we do find prayers and praises and supplication to a Supreme Being. In the Vedas — the Hindu books — the powers of Nature are gods; in the Avesta they are spirits, or servants of the Supreme.

"The main difference between the Vedic and Avestan religions is that in the latter the Vedic worship of natural powers and phenomena is superseded by a more ethical and personal interest. Ahura-Mazda (Ormazd), the living wisdom, replaces Indra, the lightning-god. In Iran there grew up, what India never saw, a consciousness of world-purpose, ethical and spiritual; a reference of the ideal to the future rather than the

present; a promise of progress; and the idea that the law of the universe means the final deliverance of good from evil, and its eternal triumph."[1]

The loftiness which modern scholars like Haug, Lenormant, and Spiegel see in the Zend-Avesta pertains more directly to the earlier portions of these sacred writings, attributable to Zoroaster, called the Gâthâs. But in the course of time the Avesta was subjected to many additions and interpretations, called the Zend, which show degeneracy. A world of myth and legend is crowded into liturgical fragments. The old Bactrian tongue in which the Avesta was composed became practically a dead language. There entered into the Avesta old Chaldæan traditions. It would be strange if the pure faith of Zoroaster should not be corrupted after Persia had conquered Babylon, and even after its alliance with Media, where the Magi had great reputation for knowledge. And yet even with the corrupting influence of the superstitions of Babylon, to say nothing of Media, the Persian conquerors did not wholly forget the God of their fathers in their old Bactrian home. And it is probable that one reason why Cyrus and Darius treated the Jews with so much kindness and generosity was the sympathy they felt for the monotheism of the Jewish religion in contrast with the polytheism and idolatry of the conquered

[1] Samuel Johnson's Religion of Persia.

Babylonians. It is not unreasonable to suppose that both the Persians and Jews worshipped substantially the one God who made the heaven and the earth, notwithstanding the dualism which entered into the Persian religion, and the symbolic worship of fire which is the most powerful agent in Nature; and it is considered by many that from the Persians the Jews received, during their Captivity, their ideas concerning a personal Devil, or Power of Evil, of which no hint appears in the Law or the earlier Prophets. It would certainly seem to be due to that monotheism which modern scholars see behind the dualism of Persia, as an elemental principle of the old religion of Iran, that the Persians were the noblest people of Pagan antiquity, and practised the highest morality known in the ancient world. Virtue and heroism went hand in hand; and both virtue and heroism were the result of their religion. But when the Persians became intoxicated with the wealth and power they acquired on the fall of Babylon, then their degeneracy was rapid, and their faith became obscured. Had it been the will of Providence that the Greeks should have contended with the Persians under the leadership of Cyrus, — the greatest Oriental conqueror known in history, — rather than under Xerxes, then even an Alexander might have been baffled. The great mistake of the Persian monarchs in their degeneracy was in trust-

ing to the magnitude of their armies rather than in their ancient discipline and national heroism. The consequence was a panic, which would not have taken place under Cyrus, whenever they met the Greeks in battle. It was a panic which dispersed the Persian hosts in the fatal battle of Arbela, and made Alexander the master of western Asia. But degenerate as the Persians became, they rallied under succeeding dynasties, and in Artaxerxes II. and Chosroes the Romans found, in their declining glories, their most formidable enemies.

Though the brightness of the old religion of Zoroaster ceased to shine after the Persian conquests, and religious rites fell into the hands of the Magi, yet it is the only Oriental religion which entered into Christianity after its magnificent triumph, unless we trace early monasticism to the priests of India. Christianity had a hard battle with Gnosticism and Manichæism, — both of Persian origin, — and did not come out unscathed. No Grecian system of philosophy, except Platonism, entered into the Christian system so influentially as the disastrous Manichæan heresy, which Augustine combated. The splendid mythology of the Greeks, as well as the degrading polytheism of Egypt, Assyria, and Phœnicia, passed away before the power of the cross; but Persian speculations remained. Even Origen, the greatest scholar of Christian anti-

quity, was tainted with them. And the mighty myths of the origin of evil, which perplexed Zoroaster, still remain unsolved; but the belief of the final triumph of good over evil is common to both Christians and the disciples of the Bactrian sage.

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RELIGIONS OF INDIA.

BRAHMANISM AND BUDDHISM.

RELIGIONS OF INDIA.

BRAHMANISM AND BUDDHISM.

THAT form of ancient religion which has of late excited the most interest is Buddhism. An inquiry into its characteristics is especially interesting, since so large a part of the human race — nearly five hundred millions out of the thirteen hundred millions — still profess to embrace the doctrines which were taught by Buddha, although his religion has become so corrupted that his original teachings are nearly lost sight of. The same may be said of the doctrines of Confucius. The religions of ancient Egypt, Assyria, and Greece have utterly passed away, and what we have had to say of these is chiefly a matter of historic interest, as revealing the forms assumed by the human search for a supernatural Ruler when moulded by human ambitions, powers, and indulgence in the "lust of the eye and the pride of life," rather than by aspirations toward the pure and the spiritual.

Buddha was the great reformer of the religious system of the Hindus, although he lived nearly fifteen hundred or two thousand years after the earliest Brahmanical ascendency. But before we can appreciate his work and mission, we must examine the system he attempted to reform, even as it is impossible to present the Protestant Reformation without first considering mediæval Catholicism before the time of Luther. It was the object of Buddha to break the yoke of the Brahmans, and to release his countrymen from the austerities, the sacrifices, and the rigid sacerdotalism which these ancient priests imposed, without essentially subverting ancient religious ideas. He was a moralist and reformer, rather than the founder of a religion.

Brahmanism is one of the oldest religions of the world. It was flourishing in India at a period before history was written. It was coeval with the religion of Egypt in the time of Abraham, and perhaps at a still earlier date. But of its earliest form and extent we know nothing, except from the sacred poems of the Hindus called the Vedas, written in Sanskrit probably fifteen hundred years before Christ, — for even the date of the earliest of the Vedas is unknown. Fifty years ago we could not have understood the ancient religions of India. But Sir William Jones in the latter part of the last century, a man of im-

mense erudition and genius for the acquisition of languages, at that time an English judge in India, prepared the way for the study of Sanskrit, the literary language of ancient India, by the translation and publication of the laws of Menu. He was followed in his labors by the Schlegels of Germany, and by numerous scholars and missionaries. Within fifty years this ancient and beautiful language has been so perseveringly studied that we know something of the people by whom it was once spoken, — even as Egyptologists have revealed something of ancient Egypt by interpreting the hieroglyphics; and Chaldæan investigators have found stores of knowledge in the Babylonian bricks.

The Sanskrit, as now interpreted, reveals to us the meaning of those poems called Vedas, by which we are enabled to understand the early laws and religion of the Hindus. It is poetry, not history, which makes this revelation, for the Hindus have no history farther back than five or six hundred years before Christ. It is from Homer and Hesiod that we get an idea of the gods of Greece, not from Herodotus or Xenophon.

From comparative philology, a new science, of which Prof. Max Müller is one of the greatest expounders, we learn that the roots of various European languages, as well as of the Latin and Greek, are substantially

the same as those of the Sanskrit spoken by the Hindus thirty-five hundred years ago, from which it is inferred that the Hindus were a people of like remote origin with the Greeks, the Italic races (Romans, Italians, French), the Slavic races (Russian, Polish, Bohemian), the Teutonic races of England and the Continent, and the Keltic races. These are hence alike called the Indo-European races; and as the same linguistic roots are found in their languages and in the Zend-Avesta, we infer that the ancient Persians, or inhabitants of Iran, belonged to the same great Aryan race.

The original seat of this race, it is supposed, was in the high table-lands of Central Asia, in or near Bactria, east of the Caspian Sea, and north and west of the Himalaya Mountains. This country was so cold and sterile and unpropitious that winter predominated, and it was difficult to support life. But the people, inured to hardship and privation, were bold, hardy, adventurous, and enterprising.

It is a most interesting process, as described by the philologists, which has enabled them, by tracing the history of words through their various modifications in different living languages, to see how the lines of growth converge as they are followed back to the simple Aryan roots. And there, getting at the meanings of the things or thoughts the words originally

expressed, we see revealed, in the reconstruction of a language that no longer exists, the material objects and habits of thought and life of a people who passed away before history began, — so imperishable are the unconscious embodiments of mind, even in the airy and unsubstantial forms of unwritten speech! By this process, then, we learn that the Aryans were a nomadic people, and had made some advance in civilization. They lived in houses which were roofed, which had windows and doors. Their common cereal was barley, the grain of cold climates. Their wealth was in cattle, and they had domesticated the cow, the sheep, the goat, the horse, and the dog. They used yokes, axes, and ploughs. They wrought in various metals; they spun and wove, navigated rivers in sail-boats, and fought with bows, lances, and swords. They had clear perceptions of the rights of property, which were based on land. Their morals were simple and pure, and they had strong natural affections. Polygamy was unknown among them. They had no established sacerdotal priesthood. They worshipped the powers of Nature, especially fire, the source of light and heat, which they so much needed in their dreary land. Authorities differ as to their primeval religion, some supposing that it was monotheistic, and others polytheistic, and others again pantheistic.

Most of the ancient nations were controlled more or

less by priests, who, as their power increased, instituted a caste to perpetuate their influence. Whether or not we hold the primitive religion of mankind to have been a pure theism, directly revealed by God, — which is my own conviction, — it is equally clear that the form of religion recorded in the earliest written records of poetry or legend was a worship of the sun and moon and planets. I believe this to have been a corruption of original theism; many think it to have been a stage of upward growth in the religious sense of primitive man. In all the ancient nations the sun-god was a prominent deity, as the giver of heat and light, and hence of fertility to the earth. The emblem of the sun was fire, and hence fire was deified, especially among the Hindus, under the name of Agni, — the Latin *ignis*.

Fire, caloric, or heat in some form was, among the ancient nations, supposed to be the *animus mundi*. In Egypt, as we have seen, Osiris, the principal deity, was a form of Ra, the sun-god. In Assyria, Asshur, the substitute for Ra, was the supreme deity. In India we find Mitra, and in Persia Mithra, the sun-god, among the prominent deities, as Helios was among the Greeks, and Phœbus Apollo among the Romans. The sun was not always the supreme divinity, but invariably held one of the highest places in the Pagan pantheon.

It is probable that the religion of the common progenitors of the Hindus, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Kelts, Teutons, and Slavs, in their hard and sterile home in Central Asia, was a worship of the powers of Nature verging toward pantheism, although the earliest of the Vedas representing the ancient faith seem to recognize a supreme power and intelligence — God — as the common father of the race, to whom prayers and sacrifices were devoutly offered. Freeman Clarke quotes from Müller's "Ancient Sanskrit Literature" one of the hymns in which the unity of God is most distinctly recognized: —

"In the beginning there arose the Source of golden light. He was the only Lord of all that is. He established the earth and sky. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifices? It is he who giveth life, who giveth strength, who governeth all men; through whom heaven was established, and the earth created."

But if the Supreme God whom we adore was recognized by this ancient people, he was soon lost sight of in the multiplied manifestations of his power, so that Rawlinson thinks[1] that when the Aryan race separated in their various migrations, which resulted in what we call the Indo-European group of races, there was no conception of a single supreme power, from whom man and nature have alike their origin, but Nature-

[1] Religions of the Ancient World, p. 105.

worship, ending in an extensive polytheism, — as among the Assyrians and Egyptians.

As to these Aryan migrations, we do not know when a large body crossed the Himalaya Mountains, and settled on the banks of the Indus, but probably it was at least two thousand years before Christ. Northern India had great attractions to those hardy nomadic people, who found it so difficult to get a living during the long winters of their primeval home. India was a country of fruits and flowers, with an inexhaustible soil, favorable to all kinds of production, where but little manual labor was required, — a country abounding in every kind of animals, and every kind of birds; a land of precious stones and minerals, of hills and valleys, of majestic rivers and mountains, with a beautiful climate and a sunny sky. These Aryan conquerors drove before them the aboriginal inhabitants, who were chiefly Mongolians, or reduced them to a degrading vassalage. The conquering race was white, the conquered was dark, though not black; and this difference of color was one of the original causes of Indian caste.

It was some time after the settlement of the Aryans on the banks of the Indus and the Ganges before the Vedas were composed by the poets, who as usual gave form to religious belief, as they did in Persia and Greece. These poems, or hymns, are pantheistic.

"There is no recognition," says Monier Williams, "of a Supreme God disconnected with the worship of Nature." There was a vague and indefinite worship of the Infinite under various names, such as the sun, the sky, the air, the dawn, the winds, the storms, the waters, the rivers, which alike charmed and terrified, and seemed to be instinct with life and power. God was in all things, and all things in God; but there was no idea of providential agency or of personality.

In the Vedic hymns the number of gods is not numerous, only thirty-three. The chief of these were Varuna, the sky; Mitra, the sun; and Indra, the storm: after these, Agni, fire; and Soma, the moon. The worship of these divinities was originally simple, consisting of prayer, praise, and offerings. There were no temples and no imposing sacerdotalism, although the priests were numerous. "The prayers and praises describe the wisdom, power, and goodness of the deity addressed," [1] and when the customary offerings had been made, the worshipper prayed for food, life, health, posterity, wealth, protection, happiness, whatever the object was, — generally for outward prosperity rather than for improvement in character, or for forgiveness of sin, peace of mind, or power to resist temptation. The offerings to the gods were propitiatory, in the form of victims, or libations of some juice. Nor did

[1] Rawlinson, p. 121.

these early Hindus take much thought of a future life. There is nothing in the Rig-Veda of a belief in the transmigration of souls,[1] although the Vedic bards seem to have had some hope of immortality. "He who gives alms," says one poet, "goes to the highest place in heaven: he goes to the gods.[2] . . . Where there is eternal light, in the world where the sun is placed, — in that immortal, imperishable world, place me, O Soma! . . . Where there is happiness and delight, where joy and pleasures reside, where the desires of our heart are attained, there make me immortal."

In the oldest Vedic poems there were great simplicity and joyousness, without allusion to those rites, ceremonies, and sacrifices which formed so prominent a part of the religion of India at a later period.

Four hundred years after the Rig-Veda was composed we come to the Brahmanic age, when the laws of Menu were written, when the Aryans were living in the valley of the Ganges, and the caste system had become national. The supreme deity is no longer one of the powers of Nature, like Mitra or Indra, but according to Menu he is Brahm, or Brahma, — "an eternal, unchangeable, absolute being, the soul of all beings, who, having willed to produce various beings

[1] Wilson: Rig-Veda, vol. iii. p. 170.

[2] Müller: Chips from a German Workshop, vol. i. p. 46.

from his own divine substance, created the waters and placed in them a productive seed. The seed became an egg, and in that egg he was born, but sat inactive for a year, when he caused the egg to divide itself; and from its two divisions he framed the heaven above, and the earth beneath. From the supreme soul Brahma drew forth mind, existing substantially, though unperceived by the senses; and before mind, the reasoning power, he produced consciousness, the internal monitor; and before them both he produced the great principle of the soul. . . . The soul is, in its substance, from Brahma himself, and is destined finally to be resolved into him. The soul, then, is simply an emanation from Brahma; but it will not return unto him at death necessarily, but must migrate from body to body, until it is purified by profound abstraction and emancipated from all desires."

This is the substance of the Hindu pantheism as taught by the laws of Menu. It accepts God, but without personality or interference with the world's affairs, — not a God to be loved, scarcely to be feared, but a mere abstraction of the mind.

The theology which is thus taught in the Brahmanical Vedas, it would seem, is the result of lofty questionings and profound meditation on the part of the Indian sages or priests, rather than the creation of poets.

In the laws of Menu, intended to exalt the Brahmanical caste, we read, as translated by Sir William Jones: —

"To a man contaminated by sensuality, neither the Vedas, nor liberality, nor sacrifices, nor strict observances, nor pious austerities, ever procure felicity. . . . Let not a man be proud of his rigorous devotion; let him not, having sacrificed, utter a falsehood; having made a donation, let him never proclaim it. . . . By falsehood the sacrifice becomes vain; by pride the merit of devotion is lost. . . . Single is each man born, single he dies, single he receives the reward of the good, and single the punishment of his evil, deeds. . . . By forgiveness of injuries the learned are purified; by liberality, those who have neglected their duty; by pious meditation, those who have secret thoughts; by devout austerity, those who best know the Vedas. . . . Bodies are cleansed by water; the mind is purified by truth; the vital spirit, by theology and devotion; the understanding, by clear knowledge. . . . A faithful wife who wishes to attain in heaven the mansion of her husband, must do nothing unkind to him, be he living or dead; let her not, when her lord is deceased, even pronounce the name of another man; let her continue till death, forgiving all injuries, performing harsh duties, avoiding every sensual pleasure, and cheerfully practising the incomparable rules of virtue. . . . The soul itself is its own witness, the soul itself is its own refuge; offend not thy conscious soul, the supreme internal witness of man. . . . O friend to virtue,

the Supreme Spirit, which is the same as thyself, resides in thy bosom perpetually, and is an all-knowing inspector of thy goodness or wickedness."

Such were the truths uttered on the banks of the Ganges one thousand years before Christ. But with these views there is an exaltation of the Brahmanical or sacerdotal life, hard to be distinguished from the recognition of divine qualities. "From his high birth," says Menu, "a Brahman is an object of veneration, even to deities." Hence, great things are expected of him; his food must be roots and fruit, his clothing of bark fibres; he must spend his time in reading the Vedas; he is to practise austerities by exposing himself to heat and cold; he is to beg food but once a day; he must be careful not to destroy the life of the smallest insect; he must not taste intoxicating liquors. A Brahman who has thus mortified his body by these modes is exalted into the divine essence. This was the early creed of the Brahman before corruption set in. And in these things we see a striking resemblance to the doctrines of Buddha. Had there been no corruption of Brahmanism, there would have been no Buddhism; for the principles of Buddhism were those of early Brahmanism.

But Brahmanism became corrupted. Like the Mosaic Law, under the sedulous care of the sacerdotal orders it ripened into a most burdensome ritualism.

The Brahmanical caste became tyrannical, exacting, and oppressive. With the supposed sacredness of his person, and with the laws made in his favor, the Brahman became intolerable to the people, who were ground down by sacrifices, expiatory offerings, and wearisome and minute ceremonies of worship. Caste destroyed all ideas of human brotherhood; it robbed the soul of its affections and its aspirations. Like the Pharisees in the time of Jesus, the Brahmans became oppressors of the people. As in Pagan Egypt and in Christian mediæval Europe, the priests held the keys of heaven and hell; their power was more than Druidical.

But the Brahman, when true to the laws of Menu, led in one sense a lofty life. Nor can we despise a religion which recognized the value and immortality of the soul, a state of future rewards and punishments, though its worship was encumbered by rites, ceremonies, and sacrifices. It was spiritual in its essential peculiarities, having reference to another world rather than to this, which is more than we can say of the religion of the Greeks; it was not worldly in its ends, seeking to save the soul rather than to pamper the body; it had aspirations after a higher life; it was profoundly reverential, recognizing a supreme intelligence and power, indefinitely indeed, but sincerely, — not an incarnated deity like the Zeus of

the Greeks, but an infinite Spirit, pervading the universe. The pantheism of the Brahmans was better than the godless materialism of the Chinese. It aspired to rise to a knowledge of God as the supremest wisdom and grandest attainment of mortal man. It made too much of sacrifices; but sacrifices were common to all the ancient religions except the Persian.

> "He who through knowledge or religious acts
> Henceforth attains to immortality,
> Shall first present his body, Death, to thee."

Whether human sacrifices were offered in India when the Vedas were composed we do not know, but it is believed to be probable. The oldest form of sacrifice was the offering of food to the deity. Dr. H. C. Trumbull, in his work on "The Blood Covenant," thinks that the origin of animal sacrifices was like that of circumcision, — a pouring out of blood (the universal, ancient symbol of *life*) as a sign of devotion to the deity; and the substitution of animals was a natural and necessary mode of making this act of consecration a frequent and continuing one. This presents a nobler view of the whole sacrificial system than the common one. Yet doubtless the latter soon prevailed; for following upon the devoted life-offerings to the Divine Friend, came propitiatory rites to appease divine anger or gain divine favor. Then came in the natural human self-seeking of the sacerdotal class, for the multiplication

of sacrifices tended to exalt the priesthood, and thus to perpetuate caste.

Again, the Brahmans, if practising austerities to weaken sensual desires, like the monks of Syria and Upper Egypt, were meditative and intellectual; they evolved out of their brains whatever was lofty in their system of religion and philosophy. Constant and profound meditation on the soul, on God, and on immortality was not without its natural results. They explored the world of metaphysical speculation. There is scarcely an hypothesis advanced by philosophers in ancient or modern times, which may not be found in the Brahmanical writings. "We find in the writings of these Hindus materialism, atomism, pantheism, Pyrrhonism, idealism. They anticipated Plato, Kant, and Hegel. They could boast of their Spinozas and their Humes long before Alexander dreamed of crossing the Indus. From them the Pythagoreans borrowed a great part of their mystical philosophy, of their doctrine of transmigration of souls, and the unlawfulness of eating animal food. From them Aristotle learned the syllogism. . . . In India the human mind exhausted itself in attempting to detect the laws which regulate its operation, before the philosophers of Greece were beginning to enter the precincts of metaphysical inquiry." This intellectual subtlety, acumen, and logical power the

Brahmans never lost. To-day the Christian missionary finds them his superiors in the sports of logical tournaments, whenever the Brahman condescends to put forth his powers of reasoning.

Brahmanism carried idealism to the extent of denying any reality to sense or matter, declaring that sense is a delusion. It sought to leave the soul emancipated from desire, from a material body, in a state which according to Indian metaphysics is *being*, but not *existence*. Desire, anger, ignorance, evil thoughts are consumed by the fire of knowledge.

But I will not attempt to explain the ideal pantheism which Brahmanical philosophers substituted for the Nature-worship taught in the earlier Vedas. This proved too abstract for the people; and the Brahmans, in the true spirit of modern Jesuitism, wishing to accommodate their religion to the people, — who were in bondage to their tyranny, and who have ever been inclined to sensuous worship, — multiplied their sacrifices and sacerdotal rites, and even permitted a complicated polytheism. Gradually piety was divorced from morality. Siva and Vishnu became worshipped, as well as Brahma and a host of other gods unknown to the earlier Vedas.

In the sixth century before Christ, the corruption of society had become so flagrant under the teachings and government of the Brahmans, that a reform was

imperatively needed. "The pride of race had put an impassable barrier between the Aryan-Hindus and the conquered aborigines, while the pride of both had built up an equally impassable barrier between the different classes among the Aryan people themselves." The old childlike joy in life, so manifest in the Vedas, had died away. A funereal gloom hung over the land; and the gloomiest people of all were the Brahmans themselves, devoted to a complicated ritual of ceremonial observances, to needless and cruel sacrifices, and a repulsive theology. The worship of Nature had degenerated into the worship of impure divinities. The priests were inflated with a puerile but sincere belief in their own divinity, and inculcated a sense of duty which was nothing else than a degrading slavery to their own caste.

Under these circumstances Buddhism arose as a protest against Brahmanism. But it was rather an ethical than a religious movement; it was an attempt to remove misery from the world, and to elevate ordinary life by a reform of morals. It was effected by a prince who goes by the name of Buddha, — the "Enlightened," — who was supposed by his later followers to be an incarnation of Deity, miraculously conceived, and sent into the world to save men. He was nearly contemporary with Confucius, although the Buddhistic doctrines were not introduced into China until about

two hundred years before the Christian era. He is supposed to have belonged to a warlike tribe called Sâkyas, of great reputed virtue, engaged in agricultural pursuits, who had entered northern India and made a permanent settlement several hundred years before. The name by which the reformer is generally known is Gautama, borrowed by the Sâkyas after their settlement in India from one of the ancient Vedic bard-families. The foundation of our knowledge of Sâkya Buddha is from a Life of him by Asvaghosha, in the first century of our era; and this life is again founded on a legendary history, not framed after any Indian model, but worked out among the nations in the north of India.

The Life of Buddha by Asvaghosha is a poetical romance of nearly ten thousand lines. It relates the miraculous conception of the Indian sage, by the descent of a spirit on his mother, Maya, — a woman of great purity of mind. The child was called Siddârtha, or "the perfection of all things." His father ruled a considerable territory, and was careful to conceal from the boy, as he grew up, all knowledge of the wickedness and misery of the world. He was therefore carefully educated within the walls of the palace, and surrounded with every luxury, but not allowed even to walk or drive in the royal gardens for fear he might see misery and sorrow. A beautiful

girl was given to him in marriage, full of dignity and grace, with whom he lived in supreme happiness.

At length, as his mind developed and his curiosity increased to see and know things and people beyond the narrow circle to which he was confined, he obtained permission to see the gardens which surrounded the palace. His father took care to remove everything in his way which could suggest misery and sorrow; but a *deva*, or angel, assumed the form of an aged man, and stood beside his path, apparently struggling for life, weak and oppressed. This was a new sight to the prince, who inquired of his charioteer what kind of a man it was. Forced to reply, the charioteer told him that this infirm old man had once been young, sportive, beautiful, and full of every enjoyment.

On hearing this, the prince sank into profound meditation, and returned to the palace sad and reflective; for he had learned that the common lot of man is sad, — that no matter how beautiful, strong, and sportive a boy is, the time will come, in the course of Nature, when this boy will be wrinkled, infirm, and helpless. He became so miserable and dejected on this discovery that his father, to divert his mind, arranged other excursions for him; but on each occasion a *deva* contrived to appear before him in the form of some disease or misery. At last

he saw a dead man carried to his grave, which still more deeply agitated him, for he had not known that this calamity was the common lot of all men. The same painful impression was made on him by the death of animals, and by the hard labors and privations of poor people. The more he saw of life as it was, the more he was overcome by the sight of sorrow and hardship on every side. He became aware that youth, vigor, and strength of life in the end fulfilled the law of ultimate destruction. While meditating on this sad reality beneath a flowering Jambu tree, where he was seated in the profoundest contemplation, a *deva*, transformed into a religious ascetic, came to him and said, "I am a Shâman. Depressed and sad at the thought of age, disease, and death, I have left my home to seek some way of rescue; yet everywhere I find these evils, — all things hasten to decay. Therefore I seek that happiness which is only to be found in that which never perishes, that never knew a beginning, that looks with equal mind on enemy and friend, that heeds not wealth nor beauty, — the happiness to be found in solitude, in some dell free from molestation, all thought about the world destroyed."

This embodies the soul of Buddhism, its elemental principle, — to escape from a world of misery and death; to hide oneself in contemplation in some lonely

spot, where indifference to passing events is gradually acquired, where life becomes one grand negation, and where the thoughts are fixed on what is eternal and imperishable, instead of on the mortal and transient.

The prince, who was now about thirty years of age, after this interview with the supposed ascetic, firmly resolved himself to become a hermit, and thus attain to a higher life, and rise above the misery which he saw around him on every hand. So he clandestinely and secretly escapes from his guarded palace; lays aside his princely habits and ornaments; dismisses all attendants, and even his horse; seeks the companionship of Brahmans, and learns all their penances and tortures. Finding a patient trial of this of no avail for his purpose, he leaves the Brahmans, and repairs to a quiet spot by the banks of a river, and for six years practises the most severe fasting and profound meditation. This was the form which piety had assumed in India from time immemorial, under the guidance of the Brahmans; for Siddârtha as yet is not the "enlightened," — he is only an inquirer after that saving knowledge which will open the door of a divine felicity, and raise him above a world of disease and death.

Siddârtha's rigorous austerities, however, do not open this door of saving truth. His body is wasted, and his strength fails; he is near unto death. The conviction fastens on his lofty and inquiring mind that to

arrive at the end he seeks he must enter by some other door than that of painful and useless austerities, and hence that the teachings of the Brahmans are fundamentally wrong. He discovers that no amount of austerities will extinguish desire, or produce ecstatic contemplation. In consequence of these reflections a great change comes over him, which is the turning-point of his history. He resolves to quit his self-inflicted torments as of no avail. He meets a shepherd's daughter, who offers him food out of compassion for his emaciated and miserable condition. The rich rice milk, sweet and perfumed, restores his strength. He renounces asceticism, and wanders to a spot more congenial to his changed views and condition.

Siddârtha's full enlightenment, however, has not yet come. Under the shade of the Bôdhi tree he devotes himself again to religious contemplation, and falls into rapt ecstasies. He remains a while in peaceful quiet; the morning sunbeams, the dispersing mists, and lovely flowers seem to pay tribute to him. He passes through successive stages of ecstasy, and suddenly upon his opened mind bursts the knowledge of his previous births in different forms; of the causes of re-birth, — ignorance (the root of evil) and unsatisfied desires; and of the way to extinguish desires by right thinking, speaking, and living, not by outward observ-

ance of forms and ceremonies. He is emancipated from the thraldom of those austerities which have formed the basis of religious life for generations unknown, and he resolves to teach.

Buddha travels slowly to the sacred city of Benares, converting by the way even Brahmans themselves. He claims to have reached perfect wisdom. He is followed by disciples, for there was something attractive and extraordinary about him; his person was beautiful and commanding. While he shows that painful austerities will not produce wisdom, he also teaches that wisdom is not reached by self-indulgence; that there is a middle path between penance and pleasures, even *temperance*, — the use, but not abuse, of the good things of earth. In his first sermon he declares that sorrow is in self; therefore to get rid of sorrow is to get rid of self. The means to this end is to forget self in deeds of mercy and kindness to others; to crucify demoralizing desires; to live in the realm of devout contemplation.

The active life of Buddha now begins, and for fifty years he travels from place to place as a teacher, gathers around him disciples, frames rules for his society, and brings within his community both the rich and poor. He even allows women to enter it. He thus matures his system, which is destined to be embraced by so large a part of the human race, and

finally dies at the age of eighty, surrounded by reverential followers, who see in him an incarnation of the Deity.

Thus Buddha devoted his life to the welfare of men, moved by an exceeding tenderness and pity for the objects of misery which he beheld on every side. He attempted to point out a higher life, by which sorrow would be forgotten. He could not prevent sorrow culminating in old age, disease, and death; but he hoped to make men ignore their miseries, and thus rise above them to a beatific state of devout contemplation and the practice of virtues, for which he laid down certain rules and regulations.

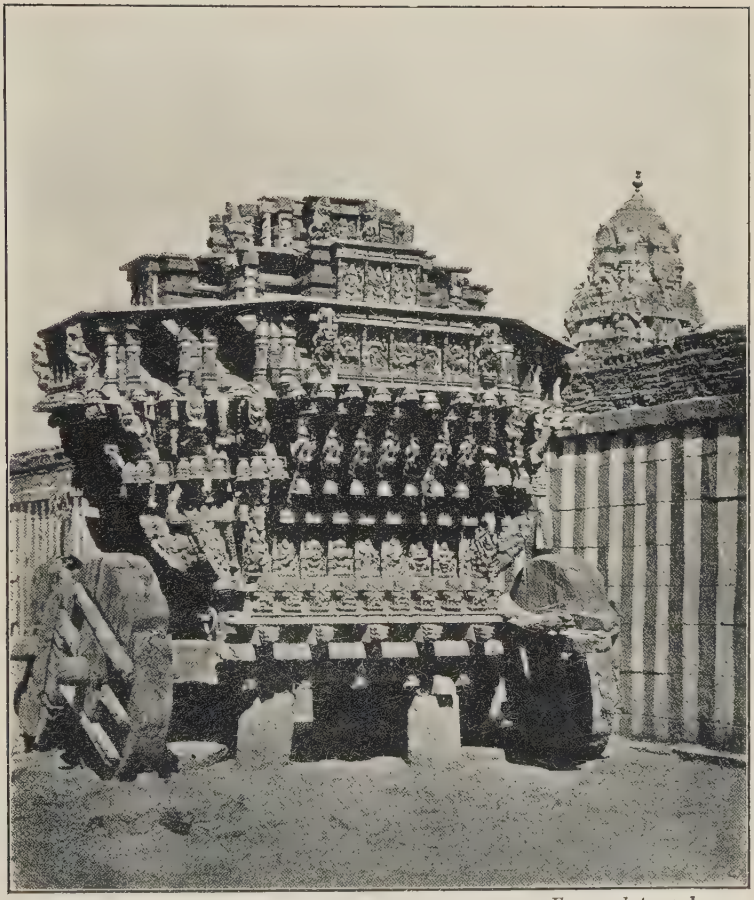
It is astonishing how the new doctrines spread, — from India to China, from China to Japan and Ceylon, until Eastern Asia was filled with pagodas, temples, and monasteries to attest his influence; some eighty-five thousand existed in China alone. Buddha probably had as many converts in China as Confucius himself. The Buddhists from time to time were subjected to great persecution from the emperors of China, in which their sacred books were destroyed; and in India the Brahmans at last regained their power, and expelled Buddhism from the country. In the year 845 A.D. two hundred and sixty thousand monks and nuns were made to return to secular life in China, being regarded as mere drones, — lazy and useless members of the

community. But the policy of persecution was reversed by succeeding emperors. In the thirteenth century there were in China nearly fifty thousand Buddhist temples and two hundred and thirteen thousand monks; and these represented but a fraction of the professed adherents of the religion. Under the present dynasty the Buddhists are proscribed, but still they flourish.

Now, what has given to the religion of Buddha such an extraordinary attraction for the people of Eastern Asia?

Buddhism has a twofold aspect, — *practical* and *speculative*. In its most definite form it was a moral and philanthropic movement, — the reaction against Brahmanism, which had no humanity, and which was as repulsive and oppressive as Roman Catholicism was when loaded down with ritualism and sacerdotal rites, when Europe was governed by priests, when churches were damp, gloomy crypts, before the tall cathedrals arose in their artistic beauty.

From a religious and philosophical point of view, Buddhism at first did not materially differ from Brahmanism. The same dreamy pietism, the same belief in the transmigration of souls, the same pantheistic ideas of God and Nature, the same desire for rest and final absorption in the divine essence characterized both. In both there was a certain principle of faith,



From a photograph

THE CAR OF JUGGERNAUT

which was a feeling of reverence rather than the recognition of the unity and personality and providence of God. The prayer of the Buddhist was a yearning for deliverance from sorrow, a hope of final rest; but this was not to be attained until desires and passions were utterly suppressed in the soul, which could be effected only by prayer, devout meditations, and a rigorous self-discipline. In order to be purified and fitted for Nirvana the soul, it was supposed, must pass through successive stages of existence in mortal forms, without conscious recollection, — innumerable births and deaths, with sorrow and disease. And the final state of supreme blessedness, the ending of the long and weary transmigration, would be attained only with the extinction of all desires, even the instinctive desire for existence.

Buddha had no definite ideas of the deity, and the worship of a personal God is nowhere to be found in his teachings, which exposed him to the charge of atheism. He even supposed that gods were subject to death, and must return to other forms of life before they obtained final rest in Nirvana. Nirvana means that state which admits of neither birth nor death, where there is no sorrow or disease, — an impassive state of existence, absorption in the Spirit of the Universe. In the Buddhist catechism Nirvana is defined as the "total cessation of changes; a perfect rest; the

absence of desire, illusion, and sorrow; the total obliteration of everything that goes to make up the physical man." This theory of re-births, or transmigration of souls, is very strange and unnatural to our less imaginative and subtile Occidental minds; but to the speculative Orientals it is an attractive and reasonable belief. They make the "spirit" the immortal part of man, the "soul" being its emotional embodiment, its "spiritual body," whose unsatisfied desires cause its birth and re-birth into the fleshly form of the physical "body," — a very brief and temporary incarnation. When by the progressive enlightenment of the spirit its longings and desires have been gradually conquered, it no longer needs or has embodiment either of soul or of body; so that, to quote Elliott Coues in Olcott's "Buddhist Catechism," "a spirit in a state of conscious formlessness, subject to no further modification by embodiment, yet in full knowledge of its experiences [during its various incarnations], is Nirvanic."

Buddhism, however, viewed in any aspect, must be regarded as a gloomy religion. It is hard enough to crucify all natural desires and lead a life of self-abnegation; but for the spirit, in order to be purified, to be obliged to enter into body after body, each subject to disease, misery, and death, and then after a long series of migrations to be virtually annihilated

as the highest consummation of happiness, gives one but a poor conception of the efforts of the proudest unaided intellect to arrive at a knowledge of God and immortal bliss. It would thus seem that the true idea of God, or even that of immortality, is not an innate conception revealed by consciousness; for why should good and intellectual men, trained to study and reflection all their lives, gain no clearer or more inspiring notions of the Being of infinite love and power, or of the happiness which He is able and willing to impart? What a feeble conception of God is a being without the oversight of the worlds that he created, without volition or purpose or benevolence, or anything corresponding to our notion of personality! What a poor conception of supernal bliss, without love or action or thought or holy companionship, — only rest, unthinking repose, and absence from disease, misery, and death, a state of endless impassiveness! What is Nirvana but an escape from death and deliverance from mortal desires, where there are neither ideas nor the absence of ideas; no changes or hopes or fears, it is true, but also no joy, no aspiration, no growth, no life, — a state of nonentity, where even consciousness is practically extinguished, and individuality merged into absolute stillness and a dreamless rest? What a poor reward for ages of struggle and the final achievement of exalted virtue!

But if Buddhism failed to arrive at what we believe to be a true knowledge of God and the destiny of the soul, — the forgiveness and remission, or doing-away, of sin, and a joyful and active immortality, all which I take to be revelations rather than intuitions, — yet there were some great certitudes in its teachings which did appeal to consciousness, — certitudes recognized by the noblest teachers of all ages and nations. These were such realities as truthfulness, sincerity, purity, justice, mercy, benevolence, unselfishness, love. The human mind arrives at ethical truths, even when all speculation about God and immortality has failed. The idea of God may be lost, but not that of moral obligation, — the mutual social duties of mankind. There is a sense of duty even among savages; in the lowest civilization there is true admiration of virtue. No sage that I ever read of enjoined immorality. No ignorance can prevent the sense of shame, of honor, or of duty. Everybody detests a liar and despises a thief. Thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not kill, — these are laws written in human consciousness as well as in the code of Moses. Obedience and respect to parents are instincts as well as obligations.

Hence the prince Siddârtha, as soon as he had found the wisdom of inward motive and the folly of outward rite, shook off the yoke of the priests, and

denounced caste and austerities and penances and sacrifices as of no avail in securing the welfare and peace of the soul or the favor of deity. In all this he showed an enlightened mind, governed by wisdom and truth, and even a bold and original genius, — like Abraham when he disowned the gods of his fathers. Having thus himself gained the security of the heights, Buddha longed to help others up, and turned his attention to the moral instruction of the people of India. He was emphatically a missionary of ethics, an apostle of righteousness, a reformer of abuses, as well as a tender and compassionate man, moved to tears in view of human sorrows and sufferings. He gave up metaphysical speculations for practical philanthropy. He wandered from city to city and village to village to relieve misery and teach duties rather than theological philosophies. He did not know that God is love, but he did know that peace and rest are the result of virtuous thoughts and acts.

"Let us then," said he, "live happily, not hating those who hate us; free from greed among the greedy. . . . Proclaim mercy freely to all men; it is as large as the spaces of heaven. . . . Whoever loves will feel the longing to save not himself alone, but all others." He compares himself to a father who rescues his children from a burning house, to a physician who cures the blind. He teaches the equality of the sexes as

well as the injustice of castes. He enjoins kindness to servants and emancipation of slaves. "As a mother, as long as she lives, watches over her child, so among all beings," said Gautama, "let boundless good-will prevail. . . . Overcome evil with good, the avaricious with generosity, the false with truth. . . . Never forget thy own duty for the sake of another's. . . . If a man speaks or acts with evil thoughts pain follows, as the wheel the foot of him who draws the carriage. . . . He who lives seeking pleasure, and uncontrolled, the tempter will overcome. . . . The true sage dwells on earth, as the bee gathers sweetness with his mouth and wings. . . . One may conquer a thousand men in battle, but he who conquers himself alone is the greatest victor. . . . Let no man think lightly of sin, saying in his heart, 'It cannot overtake me.' . . . Let a man make himself what he preaches to others. . . . He who holds back rising anger as one might a rolling chariot, him, indeed, I call a driver; others may hold the reins. . . . A man who foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my ungrudging love; the more evil comes from him, the more good shall go from me."

These are some of the sayings of the Indian reformer, which I quote from extracts of his writings as translated by Sanskrit scholars. Some of these sayings rise to a height of moral beauty surpassed only

by the precepts of the great Teacher, whom many are too fond of likening to Buddha himself. The religion of Buddha is founded on a correct and virtuous life, as the only way to avoid sorrow and reach Nirvana. Its essence, theologically, is "Quietism," without firm belief in anything reached by metaphysic speculation; yet morally and practically it inculcates ennobling, active duties.

Among the rules that Buddha laid down for his disciples were — to keep the body pure; not to enter upon affairs of trade; to have no lands and cattle, or houses, or money; to abhor all hypocrisy and dissimulation; to be kind to everything that lives; never to take the life of any living being; to control the passions; to eat food only to satisfy hunger; not to feel resentment from injuries; to be patient and forgiving; to avoid covetousness, and never to tire of self-reflection. His fundamental principles are purity of mind, chastity of life, truthfulness, temperance, abstention from the wanton destruction of animal life, from vain pleasures, from envy, hatred, and malice. He does not enjoin sacrifices, for he knows no god to whom they can be offered; but "he proclaimed the brotherhood of man, if he did not reveal the fatherhood of God." He insisted on the natural equality of all men, — thus giving to caste a mortal wound, which offended the Brahmans, and finally led to the expulsion of his

followers from India. He protested against all absolute authority, even that of the Vedas. Nor did he claim, any more than Confucius, originality of doctrines, only the revival of forgotten or neglected truths. He taught that Nirvana was not attained by Brahmanical rites, but by individual virtues; and that punishment is the inevitable result of evil deeds by the inexorable law of cause and effect.

Buddhism is essentially rationalistic and ethical, while Brahmanism is a pantheistic tendency to polytheism, and ritualistic even to the most offensive sacerdotalism. The Brahman reminds me of a Dunstan, — the Buddhist of a Benedict; the former of the gloomy, spiritual despotism of the Middle Ages, — the latter of self-denying monasticism in its best ages. The Brahman is like Thomas Aquinas with his dogmas and metaphysics; the Buddhist is more like a mediæval freethinker, stigmatized as an atheist. The Brahman was so absorbed with his theological speculation that he took no account of the sufferings of humanity; the Buddhist was so absorbed with the miseries of man that the greatest blessing seemed to be entire and endless rest, the cessation of existence itself, — since existence brought desire, desire sin, and sin misery. As a religion Buddhism is an absurdity; in fact, it is no religion at all, only a system of moral philosophy. Its weak points, practically, are the abuse of philan-

thropy, its system of organized idleness and mendicancy, the indifference to thrift and industry, the multiplication of lazy fraternities and useless retreats, reminding us of monastic institutions in the days of Chaucer and Luther. The Buddhist priest is a mendicant and a pauper, clothed in rags, begging his living from door to door, in which he sees no disgrace and no impropriety. Buddhism failed to ennoble the daily occupations of life, and produced drones and idlers and religious vagabonds. In its corruption it lent itself to idolatry, for the Buddhist temples are filled with hideous images of all sorts of repulsive deities, although Buddha himself did not hold to idol worship any more than to the belief in a personal God.

"Buddhism," says the author of its accepted catechism, "teaches goodness without a God, existence without a soul, immortality without life, happiness without a heaven, salvation without a saviour, redemption without a redeemer, and worship without rites." The failure of Buddhism, both as a philosophy and a religion, is a confirmation of the great historical fact, that in the ancient Pagan world no efforts of reason enabled man unaided to arrive at a true — that is, a helpful and practically elevating — knowledge of deity. Even Buddha, one of the most gifted and excellent of all the sages who have enlightened the world, despaired of solving the great mysteries of existence, and turned

his attention to those practical duties of life which seemed to promise a way of escaping its miseries. He appealed to human consciousness; but lacking the inspiration and aid which come from a sense of personal divine influence, Buddhism has failed, on the large scale, to raise its votaries to higher planes of ethical accomplishment. And hence the necessity of that new revelation which Jesus declared amid the moral ruins of a crumbling world, by which alone can the debasing superstitions of India and the godless materialism of China be replaced with a vital spirituality, — even as the elaborate mythology of Greece and Rome gave way before the fervent earnestness of Christian apostles and martyrs.

It does not belong to my subject to present the condition of Buddhism as it exists to-day in Thibet, in Siam, in China, in Japan, in Burmah, in Ceylon, and in various other Eastern countries. It spread by reason of its sympathy with the poor and miserable, by virtue of its being a great system of philanthropy and morals which appealed to the consciousness of the lower classes. Though a proselyting religion it was never a persecuting one, and is still distinguished, in all its corruption, for its toleration.

AUTHORITIES.

The chief authorities that I would recommend for this chapter are Max Müller's History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature; Rev. S. Beal's Buddhism in China; Buddhism, by T. W. Rhys-Davids; Monier Williams's Sákoontalá; I. Muir's Sanskrit Texts; Burnouf's Essai sur la Vêda; Sir William Jones's Works; Colebrook's Miscellaneous Essays; Joseph Muller's Religious Aspects of Hindu Philosophy; Manual of Buddhism, by R. Spence Hardy; Dr. H. Clay Trumbull's The Blood Covenant; Orthodox Buddhist Catechism, by H. S. Olcott, edited by Prof. Elliott C. Coues. I have derived some instruction from Samuel Johnson's bulky and diffuse books, but more from James Freeman Clarke's Ten Great Religions, and Rawlinson's Religions of the Ancient World.

RELIGION OF THE GREEKS AND ROMANS.

CLASSIC MYTHOLOGY.

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RELIGION among the lively and imaginative Greeks took a different form from that of the Aryan race in India or Persia. However the ideas of their divinities originated in their relations to the thought and life of the people, their gods were neither abstractions nor symbols. They were simply men and women, immortal, yet having a beginning, with passions and appetites like ordinary mortals. They love, they hate, they eat, they drink, they have adventures and misfortunes like men, — only differing from men in the superiority of their gifts, in their miraculous endowments, in their stupendous feats, in their more than gigantic size, in their supernal beauty, in their intensified pleasures. It was not their aim "to raise mortals to the skies," but to enjoy themselves in feasting and love-making; not even to govern the world, but to protect their particular worshippers, — taking part and interest in human

quarrels, without reference to justice or right, and without communicating any great truths for the guidance of mankind.

The religion of Greece consisted of a series of myths, — creations for the most part of the poets, — and therefore properly called a mythology. Yet in some respects the gods of Greece resembled those of Phœnicia and Egypt, being the powers of Nature, and named after the sun, moon, and planets. Their priests did not form a sacerdotal caste, as in India and Egypt; they were more like officers of the state, to perform certain functions or duties pertaining to rites, ceremonies, and sacrifices. They taught no moral or spiritual truths to the people, nor were they held in extraordinary reverence. They were not ascetics or enthusiasts; among them were no great reformers or prophets, as among the sacerdotal class of the Jews or the Hindus. They had even no sacred books, and claimed no esoteric knowledge. Nor was their office hereditary. They were appointed by the rulers of the state, or elected by the people themselves; they imposed no restraints on the conscience, and apparently cared little for morals, leaving the people to an unbounded freedom to act and think for themselves, so far as they did not interfere with prescribed usages and laws. The real objects of Greek worship were beauty, grace, and heroic strength. The people wor-

shipped no supreme creator, no providential governor, no ultimate judge of human actions. They had no aspirations for heaven and no fear of hell. They did not feel accountable for their deeds or thoughts or words to an irresistible Power working for righteousness or truth. They had no religious sense, apart from wonder or admiration of the glories of Nature, or the good or evil which might result from the favor or hatred of the divinities they accepted.

These divinities, moreover, were not manifestations of supreme power and intelligence, but were creations of the fancy, as they came from popular legends, or the brains of poets, or the hands of artists, or the speculations of philosophers. And as everything in Greece was beautiful and radiant, — the sea, the sky, the mountains, and the valleys, — so was religion cheerful, seen in all the festivals which took the place of the Sabbaths and holy-days of more spiritually minded peoples. The worshippers of the gods danced and played and sported to the sounds of musical instruments, and revelled in joyous libations, in feasts and imposing processions, — in whatever would amuse the mind or intoxicate the senses. The gods were rather unseen companions in pleasures, in sports, in athletic contests and warlike enterprises, than beings to be adored for moral excellence or supernal knowledge. "Heaven was so near at hand that their own heroes climbed

to it and became demigods." Every grove, every fountain, every river, every beautiful spot, had its presiding deity; while every wonder of Nature, — the sun, the moon, the stars, the tempest, the thunder, the lightning, — was impersonated as an awful power for good or evil. To them temples were erected, within which were their shrines and images in human shape, glistening with gold and gems, and wrought in every form of grace or strength or beauty, and by artists of marvellous excellence.

This polytheism of Greece was exceedingly complicated, but was not so degrading as that of Egypt, since the gods were not represented by the forms of hideous animals, and the worship of them was not attended by revolting ceremonies; and yet it was divested of all spiritual aspirations, and had but little effect on personal struggles for truth or holiness. It was human and worldly, not lofty nor even reverential, except among the few who had deep religious wants. One of its characteristic features was the acknowledged impotence of the gods to secure future happiness. In fact, the future was generally ignored, and even immortality was but a dream of philosophers. Men lived not in view of future rewards and punishments, or future existence at all, but for the enjoyment of the present; and the gods themselves set the example of an immoral life. Even Zeus, "the Father of gods and

men," to whom absolute supremacy was ascribed, the work of creation, and all majesty and serenity, took but little interest in human affairs, and lived on Olympian heights like a sovereign surrounded with the instruments of his will, freely indulging in those pleasures which all lofty moral codes have forbidden, and taking part in the quarrels, jealousies, and enmities of his divine associates.

Greek mythology had its source in the legends of a remote antiquity, — probably among the Pelasgians, the early inhabitants of Greece, which they brought with them in their migration from their original settlement, or perhaps from Egypt and Phœnicia. Herodotus — and he is not often wrong — ascribes a great part of the mythology which the Greek poets elaborated to a Phœnician or Egyptian source. The legends have also some similarity to the poetic creations of the ancient Persians, who delighted in fairies and genii and extravagant exploits, like the labors of Hercules The faults and foibles of deified mortals were transmitted to posterity and incorporated with the attributes of the supreme divinity, and hence the mixture of the mighty and the mean which marks the characters of the Iliad and Odyssey. The Greeks adopted Oriental fables, and accommodated them to those heroes who figured in their own country in the earliest times. "The labors of Hercules originated in

Egypt, and relate to the annual progress of the sun in the zodiac. The rape of Proserpine, the wanderings of Ceres, the Eleusinian mysteries, and the orgies of Bacchus were all imported from Egypt or Phœnicia, while the wars between the gods and the giants were celebrated in the romantic annals of Persia. The oracle of Dodona was copied from that of Ammon in Thebes, and the oracle of Apollo at Delphos has a similar source."

Behind the Oriental legends which form the basis of Grecian mythology there was, in all probability, in those ancient times before the Pelasgians were known as Ionians and the Hellenes as Dorians, a mystical and indefinite idea of supreme power, — as among the Persians, the Hindus, and the esoteric priests of Egypt. In all the ancient religions the farther back we go the purer and loftier do we find the popular religion. Belief in supreme deity underlies all the Eastern theogonies, which belief, however, was soon perverted or lost sight of. There is great difference of opinion among philosophers as to the origin of myths, — whether they began in fable and came to be regarded as history, or began as human history and were poetized into fable. My belief is that in the earliest ages of the world there were no mythologies. Fables were the creations of those who sought to amuse or control the people, who have ever delighted

After the painting by Henri Motte

THE PYTHIA, PRIESTESS OF APOLLO, UTTERING THE ORACLES OF THE GOD AT OLYMPIA

in the marvellous. As the magnificent, the vast, the sublime, which was seen in Nature, impressed itself on the imagination of the Orientals and ended in legends, so did allegory in process of time multiply fictions and fables to an indefinite extent; and what were symbols among Eastern nations became impersonations in the poetry of Greece. Grecian mythology was a vast system of impersonated forces, beginning with the legends of heroes and ending with the personification of the faculties of the mind and the manifestations of Nature, in deities who presided over festivals, cities, groves, and mountains, with all the infirmities of human nature, and without calling out exalted sentiments of love or reverence. They are all creations of the imagination, invested with human traits and adapted to the genius of the people, who were far from being religious in the sense that the Hindus and Egyptians were. It was the natural and not the supernatural that filled their souls. It was art they worshipped, and not the God who created the heavens and the earth, and who exacts of his creatures obedience and faith.

In regard to the gods and goddesses of the Grecian Pantheon, we observe that most of them were immoral; at least they had the usual infirmities of men. They are thus represented by the poets, probably to please the people, who like all other peoples had to make

their own conceptions of God; for even a miraculous revelation of deity must be interpreted by those who receive it, according to their own understanding of the qualities revealed. The ancient Romans, themselves stern, earnest, practical, had an almost Oriental reverence for their gods, so that their Jupiter (Father of Heaven) was a majestic, powerful, all-seeing, severely just national deity, regarded by them much as the Jehovah of the Hebrews was by that nation. When in later times the conquest of Eastern countries and of Macedon and Greece brought in luxury, works of art, foreign literature, and all the delightful but enervating influences of æstheticism, the Romans became corrupted, and gradually began to identify their own more noble deities with the beautiful but unprincipled, self-indulgent, and tricky set of gods and goddesses of the Greek mythology.

The Greek Zeus, with whom were associated majesty and dominion, and who reigned supreme in the celestial hierarchy, — who as the chief god of the skies, the god of storms, ruler of the atmosphere, was the favorite deity of the Aryan race, the Indra of the Hindus, the Jupiter of the Romans, — was in his Grecian presentment a rebellious son, a faithless husband, and sometimes an unkind father. His character was a combination of weakness and strength, — anything but a pattern to be imitated, or even to be rever-

enced. He was the impersonation of power and dignity, represented by the poets as having such immense strength that if he had hold of one end of a chain, and all the gods held the other, with the earth fastened to it, he would be able to move them all.

Poseidon (Roman Neptune), the brother of Zeus, was represented as the god of the ocean, and was worshipped chiefly in maritime States. His morality was no higher than that of Zeus; moreover, he was rough, boisterous, and vindictive. He was hostile to Troy, and yet persecuted Ulysses.

Apollo, the next great personage of the Olympian divinities, was more respectable morally than his father. He was the sun-god of the Greeks, and was the embodiment of divine prescience, of healing skill, of musical and poetical productiveness, and hence the favorite of the poets. He had a form of ideal beauty, grace, and vigor, inspired by unerring wisdom and insight into futurity. He was obedient to the will of Zeus, to whom he was not much inferior in power. Temples were erected to this favorite deity in every part of Greece, and he was supposed to deliver oracular responses in several cities, especially at Delphos.

Hephæstus (Roman Vulcan), the god of fire, was a sort of jester at the Olympian court, and provoked perpetual laughter from his awkwardness and lameness. He forged the thunderbolts for Zeus, and was

the armorer of heaven. It accorded with the grim humor of the poets to make this clumsy blacksmith the husband of Aphrodite, the queen of beauty and of love.

Ares (Roman Mars), the god of war, was represented as cruel, lawless, and greedy of blood, and as occupying a subordinate position, receiving orders from Apollo and Athene.

Hermes (Roman Mercury) was the impersonation of commercial dealings, and of course was full of tricks and thievery, — the Olympian man of business, industrious, inventive, untruthful, and dishonest. He was also the god of eloquence.

Besides these six great male divinities there were six goddesses, the most important of whom was Hera (Roman Juno), wife of Zeus, and hence the Queen of Heaven. She exercised her husband's prerogatives, and thundered and shook Olympus; but she was proud, vindictive, jealous, unscrupulous, and cruel, — a poor model for women to imitate. The Greek poets, however, had a poor opinion of the female sex, and hence represent this deity without those elements of character which we most admire in woman, — gentleness, softness, tenderness, and patience. She scolded her august husband so perpetually that he gave way to complaints before the assembled deities, and that too with a bitterness hardly to be reconciled with our notions of dignity.

The Roman Juno, before the identification of the two goddesses, was a nobler character, being the queen of heaven, the protectress of virgins and of matrons, and was also the celestial housewife of the nation, watching over its revenues and its expenses. She was the especial goddess of chastity, and loose women were forbidden to touch her altars.

Athene (Roman Minerva) however, the goddess of wisdom, had a character without a flaw, and ranked with Apollo in wisdom. She even expostulated with Zeus himself when he was wrong. But on the other hand she had few attractive feminine qualities, and no amiable weaknesses.

Artemis (Roman Diana) was "a shadowy divinity, a pale reflection of her brother Apollo." She presided over the pleasures of the chase, in which the Greeks delighted, — a masculine female who took but little interest in anything intellectual.

Aphrodite (Roman Venus) was the impersonation of all that was weak and erring in the nature of woman, — the goddess of sensual desire, of mere physical beauty, silly, childish, and vain, utterly odious in a moral point of view, and mentally contemptible. This goddess was represented as exerting a great influence even when despised, fascinating yet revolting, admired and yet corrupting. She was not of much importance among the Romans, — who were far from

being sentimental or passionate, — until the growth of the legend of their Trojan origin. Then, as mother of Æneas, their progenitor, she took a high rank, and the Greek poets furnished her character.

Hestia (Roman Vesta) presided over the private hearths and homesteads of the Greeks, and imparted to them a sacred character. Her personality was vague, but she represented the purity which among both Greeks and Romans is attached to home and domestic life.

Demeter (Roman Ceres) represented Mother Earth, and thus was closely associated with agriculture and all operations of tillage and bread-making. As agriculture is the primitive and most important of all human vocations, this deity presided over civilization and law-giving, and occupied an important position in the Eleusinian mysteries.

These were the twelve Olympian divinities, or greater gods; but they represent only a small part of the Grecian Pantheon. There was Dionysus (Roman Bacchus), the god of drunkenness. This deity presided over vineyards, and his worship was attended with disgraceful orgies, — with wild dances, noisy revels, exciting music, and frenzied demonstrations.

Leto (Roman Latona), another wife of Zeus, and mother of Apollo and Diana, was a very different personage from Hera, being the impersonation of all

those womanly qualities which are valued in woman, — silent, unobtrusive, condescending, chaste, kindly, ready to help and tend, and subordinating herself to her children.

Persephone (Roman Proserpina) was the queen of the dead, ruling the infernal realm even more distinctly than her husband Pluto, severely pure as she was awful and terrible; but there were no temples erected to her, as the Greeks did not trouble themselves much about the future state.

The minor deities of the Greeks were innumerable, and were identified with every separate thing which occupied their thoughts, — with mountains, rivers, capes, towns, fountains, rocks; with domestic animals, with monsters of the deep, with demons and departed heroes, with water-nymphs and wood-nymphs, with the qualities of mind and attributes of the body; with sleep and death, old age and pain, strife and victory; with hunger, grief, ridicule, wisdom, deceit, grace; with night and day, the hours, the thunder the rainbow, — in short, all the wonders of Nature, all the affections of the soul, and all the qualities of the mind; everything they saw, everything they talked about, everything they felt. All these wonders and sentiments they impersonated; and these impersonations were supposed to preside over the things they represented, and to a certain extent were worshipped. If a man

wished the winds to be propitious, he prayed to Zeus; if he wished to be prospered in his bargains, he invoked Hermes; if he wished to be successful in war, he prayed to Ares.

He never prayed to a supreme and eternal deity, but to some special manifestation of deity, fancied or real; and hence his religion was essentially pantheistic, though outwardly polytheistic. The divinities whom he invoked he celebrated with rites corresponding with those traits which they represented. Thus, Aphrodite was celebrated with lascivious dances, and Dionysus with drunken revels. Each deity represented the Grecian ideal, — of majesty or grace or beauty or strength or virtue or wisdom or madness or folly. The character of Hera was what the poets supposed should be the attributes of the Queen of heaven; that of Leto, what should distinguish a disinterested housewife; that of Hestia, what should mark the guardian of the fireside; that of Demeter, what should show supreme benevolence and thrift; that of Athene, what would naturally be associated with wisdom, and that of Aphrodite, what would be expected from a sensual beauty. In the main, Zeus was serene, majestic, and benignant, as became the king of the gods, although he was occasionally faithless to his wife; Poseidon was boisterous, as became the monarch of the seas; Apollo was a devoted son and a bright companion, which one

would expect in a gifted poet and wise prophet, beautiful and graceful as a sun-god should be; Hephæstus, the god of fire and smiths, showed naturally the awkwardness to which manual labor leads; Ares was cruel and bloodthirsty, as the god of war should be; Hermes, as the god of trade and business, would of course be sharp and tricky; and Dionysus, the father of the vine, would naturally become noisy and rollicking in his intoxication.

Thus, whatever defects are associated with the principal deities, these are all natural and consistent with the characters they represent, or the duties and business in which they engage. Drunkenness is not associated with Zeus, or unchastity with Hera or Athene. The poets make each deity consistent with himself, and in harmony with the interests he represents. Hence the mythology of the poets is elaborate and interesting. Who has not devoured the classical dictionary before he has learned to scan the lines of Homer or of Virgil? As varied and romantic as the "Arabian Nights," it shines in the beauty of nature. In the Grecian creations of gods and goddesses there is no insult to the understanding, because these creations are in harmony with Nature, are consistent with humanity. There is no hatred and no love, no jealousy and no fear, which has not a natural cause. The poets proved themselves to be great artists in the very characters they gave to

their divinities. They did not aim to excite reverence or stimulate to duty or point out the higher life, but to amuse a worldly, pleasure-seeking, good-natured, joyous, art-loving, poetic people, who lived in the present and for themselves alone.

As a future state of rewards and punishments seldom entered into the minds of the Greeks, so the gods are never represented as conferring future salvation. The welfare of the soul was rarely thought of where there was no settled belief in immortality. The gods themselves were fed on nectar and ambrosia, that they might not die like ordinary mortals. They might prolong their own existence indefinitely, but they were impotent to confer eternal life upon their worshippers; and as eternal life is essential to perfect happiness, they could not confer even happiness in its highest sense.

On this fact Saint Augustine erected the grand fabric of his theological system. In his most celebrated work, "The City of God," he holds up to derision the gods of antiquity, and with blended logic and irony makes them contemptible as objects of worship, since they were impotent to save the soul. In his view the grand and distinguishing feature of Christianity, in contrast with Paganism, is the gift of eternal life and happiness. It is not the morality which Christ and his Apostles taught, which gave to

Christianity its immeasurable superiority over all other religions, but the promise of a future felicity in heaven. And it was this promise which gave such comfort to the miserable people of the old Pagan world, ground down by oppression, injustice, cruelty, and poverty. It was this promise which filled the converts to Christianity with joy, enthusiasm, and hope, — yea, more than this, even boundless love that salvation was the gift of God through the self-sacrifice of Christ. Immortality was brought to light by the gospel alone, and to miserable people the idea of eternal bliss after the trials of mortal life were passed was the source of immeasurable joy. No sooner was this sublime expectation of happiness planted firmly in the minds of pagans, than they threw their idols to the moles and the bats.

But even in regard to morality, Augustine showed that the gods were no examples to follow. He ridicules their morals and their offices as severely as he points out their impotency to bestow happiness. He shows the absurdity and inconsistency of tolerating players in their delineation of the vices and follies of deities for the amusement of the people in the theatre, while the priests performed the same obscenities as religious rites in the temples which were upheld by the State; so that philosophers like Varro could pour contempt on players with impunity, while he

dared not ridicule priests for doing in the temples the same things. No wonder that the popular religion at last was held in contempt by philosophers, since it was not only impotent to save, but did not stimulate to ordinary morality, to virtue, or to lofty sentiments. A religion which was held sacred in one place and ridiculed in another, before the eyes of the same people, could not in the end but yield to what was better.

If we ascribe to the poets the creation of the elaborate mythology of the Greeks, — that is, a system of gods made by men, rather than men made by gods, — whether as symbols or objects of worship, whether the religion was pantheistic or idolatrous, we find that artists even surpassed the poets in their conceptions of divine power, goodness, and beauty, and thus riveted the chains which the poets forged.

The temple of Zeus at Olympia in Elis, where the intellect and the culture of Greece assembled every four years to witness the games instituted in honor of the Father of the gods, was itself calculated to impose on the senses of the worshippers by its grandeur and beauty. The image of the god himself, sixty feet high, made of ivory, gold, and gems by the greatest of all the sculptors of antiquity, must have impressed spectators with ideas of strength and majesty even more than any poetical descriptions could do. If it was art which the Greeks worshipped rather than an unseen deity

who controlled their destinies, and to whom supreme homage was due, how nobly did the image before them represent the highest conceptions of the attributes to be ascribed to the King of Heaven! Seated on his throne, with the emblems of sovereignty in his hands and attendant deities around him, his head, neck, breast, and arms in massive proportions, and his face expressive of majesty and sweetness, power in repose, benevolence blended with strength, — the image of the Olympian deity conveyed to the minds of his worshippers everything that could inspire awe, wonder, and goodness, as well as power. No fear was blended with admiration, since his favor could be won by the magnificent rites and ceremonies which were instituted in his honor.

Clarke alludes to the sculptured Apollo Belvedere as giving a still more elevated idea of the sun-god than the poets themselves, — a figure expressive of the highest thoughts of the Hellenic mind, — and quotes Milman in support of his admiration: —

> "All, all divine! no struggling muscle glows,
> Through heaving vein no mantling life-blood flows;
> But, animate with deity alone,
> In deathless glory lives the breathing stone."

If a Christian poet can see divinity in the chiselled stone, why should we wonder at the worship of art by the pagan Greeks? The same could be said of

the statues of Artemis, of Pallas-Athene, of Aphrodite, and other "divine" productions of Grecian artists, since they represented the highest ideal the world has seen of beauty, grace, loveliness, and majesty, which the Greeks adored. Hence, though the statues of the gods are in human shape, it was not men that the Greeks worshipped, but those qualities of mind and those forms of beauty to which the cultivated intellect instinctively gave the highest praise. No one can object to this boundless admiration which the Greeks had for art in its highest forms, in so far as that admiration became worship. It was the divorce of art from morals which called out the indignation and censure of the Christian fathers, and even undermined the religion of philosophers so far as it had been directed to the worship of the popular deities, which were simply creations of poets and artists.

It is difficult to conceive how the worship of the gods could have been kept up for so long a time, had it not been for the festivals. This wise provision for providing interest and recreation for the people was also availed of by the Mosaic ritual among the Hebrews, and has been a part of most well-organized religious systems. The festivals were celebrated in honor not merely of deities, but of useful inventions, of the seasons of the year, of great national victories, — all which were religious in the pagan sense, and

constituted the highest pleasures of Grecian life. They were observed with great pomp and splendor in the open air in front of temples, in sacred groves, wherever the people could conveniently assemble to join in jocund dances, in athletic sports, and whatever could animate the soul with festivity and joy. Hence the religious worship of the Greeks was cheerful, and adapted itself to the tastes and pleasures of the people; it was, however, essentially worldly, and sometimes degrading. It was similar in its effects to the rural sports of the yeomanry of the Middle Ages, and to the theatrical representations sometimes held in mediæval churches, — certainly to the processions and pomps which the Catholic clergy instituted for the amusement of the people. Hence the sneering but acute remark of Gibbon, that all religions were equally true to the people, equally false to philosophers, and equally useful to rulers. The State encouraged and paid for sacrifices, rites, processions, and scenic dances on the same principle that they gave corn to the people to make them contented in their miseries, and severely punished those who ridiculed the popular religion when it was performed in temples, even though it winked at the ridicule of the same performances in the theatres.

Among the Greeks there were no sacred books like the Hindu Vedas or Hebrew Scriptures, in which the

people could learn duties and religious truths. The priests taught nothing; they merely officiated at rites and ceremonies. It is difficult to find out what were the means and forms of religious instruction, so far as pertained to the heart and conscience. Duties were certainly not learned from the ministers of religion. From what source did the people learn the necessity of obedience to parents, of conjugal fidelity, of truthfulness, of chastity, of honesty? It is difficult to tell. The poets and artists taught ideas of beauty, of grace, of strength; and Nature in her grandeur and loveliness taught the same things. Hence a severe taste was cultivated, which excluded vulgarity and grossness in the intercourse of life. It was the rule to be courteous, affable, gentlemanly, for all this was in harmony with the severity of art. The comic poets ridiculed pretension, arrogance, quackery, and lies. Patriotism, which was learned from the dangers of the State, amid warlike and unscrupulous neighbors, called out many manly virtues, like courage, fortitude, heroism, and self-sacrifice. A hard and rocky soil necessitated industry, thrift, and severe punishment on those who stole the fruits of labor, even as miners in the Rocky Mountains sacredly abstain from appropriating the gold of their fellow-laborers. Self-interest and self-preservation dictated many laws which secured the welfare of society. The natural sacredness of home

guarded the virtue of wives and children; the natural sense of justice raised indignation against cheating and tricks in trade. Men and women cannot live together in peace and safety without observing certain conditions, which may be ranked with virtues even among savages and barbarians, — much more so in cultivated and refined communities.

The graces and amenities of life can exist without reference to future rewards and punishments. The ultimate law of self-preservation will protect men in ordinary times against murder and violence, and will lead to public and social enactments which bad men fear to violate. A traveller ordinarily feels as safe in a highly-civilized pagan community as in a Christian city. The "heathen Chinee" fears the officers of the law as much as does a citizen of London.

The great difference between a Pagan and a Christian people is in the power of conscience, in the sense of a moral accountability to a spiritual Deity, in the hopes or fears of a future state, — motives which have a powerful influence on the elevation of individual character and the development of higher types of social organization. But whatever laws are necessary for the maintenance of order, the repression of violence, of crimes against person and the State and the general material welfare of society, are found in Pagan as well as in Christian States; and the natural affections, — of

paternal and filial love, friendship, patriotism, generosity, etc., — while strengthened by Christianity, are also an inalienable part of the God-given heritage of all mankind. We see many heroic traits, many manly virtues, many domestic amenities, and many exalted sentiments in pagan Greece, even if these were not taught by priests or sages. Every man instinctively clings to life, to property, to home, to parents, to wife and children; and hence these are guarded in every community, and the violation of these rights is ever punished with greater or less severity for the sake of general security and public welfare, even if there be no belief in God. Religion, loftily considered, has but little to do with the temporal interests of men. Governments and laws take these under their protection, and it is men who make governments and laws. They are made from the instinct of self-preservation, from patriotic aspirations, from the necessities of civilization. Religion, from the Christian standpoint, is unworldly, having reference to the life which is to come, to the enlightenment of the conscience, to restraint from sins not punishable by the laws, and to the inspiration of virtues which have no worldly reward.

This kind of religion was not taught by Grecian priests or poets or artists, and did not exist in Greece, with all its refinements and glories, until partially communicated by those philosophers who meditated on the secrets of Nature, the mighty mysteries of life,

and the duties which reason and reflection reveal. And it may be noticed that the philosophers themselves, who began with speculations on the origin of the universe, the nature of the gods, the operations of the mind, and the laws of matter, ended at last with ethical inquiries and injunctions. We see this illustrated in Socrates and Zeno. They seemed to despair of finding out God, of explaining the wonders of his universe, and came down to practical life in its sad realities, — like Solomon himself when he said, "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." In ethical teachings and inquiries some of these philosophers reached a height almost equal to that which Christian sages aspired to climb; and had the world practised the virtues which they taught, there would scarcely have been need of a new revelation, so far as the observance of rules to promote happiness on earth is concerned. But these Pagan sages did not hold out hopes beyond the grave. They even doubted whether the soul was mortal or immortal. They did teach many ennobling and lofty truths for the enlightenment of thinkers; but they held out no divine help, nor any hope of completing in a future life the failures of this one; and hence they failed in saving society from a persistent degradation, and in elevating ordinary men to those glorious heights reached by the Christian converts.

That was the point to which Augustine directed his vast genius and his unrivalled logic. He admitted that arts might civilize, and that the elaborate mythology which he ridiculed was interesting to the people, and was, as a creation of the poets, ingenious and beautiful; but he showed that it did not reveal a future state, that it did not promise eternal happiness, that it did not restrain men from those sins which human laws could not punish, and that it did not exalt the soul to lofty communion with the Deity, or kindle a truly spiritual life, and therefore was worthless as a religion, imbecile to save, and only to be classed with those myths which delight an ignorant or sensuous people, and with those rites which are shrouded in mystery and gloom. Nor did he, in his matchless argument against the gods of Greece and Rome, take for his attack those deities whose rites were most degrading and senseless, and which the thinking world despised, but the most lofty forms of pagan religion, such as were accepted by moralists and philosophers like Seneca and Plato. And thus he reached the intelligence of the age, and gave a final blow to all the gods of antiquity.

It would be instructive to show that the religion of Greece, as embraced by the people, did not prevent or even condemn those social evils that are the greatest blot on enlightened civilization. It did not discourage

slavery, the direst evil which ever afflicted humanity; it did not elevate woman to her true position at home or in public; it ridiculed those passive virtues that are declared and commended in the Sermon on the Mount; it did not pronounce against the wickedness of war, or the vanity of military glory; it did not dignify home, or the virtues of the family circle; it did not declare the folly of riches, or show that the love of money is a root of all evil. It made sensual pleasure and outward prosperity the great aims of successful ambition, and hid with an impenetrable screen from the eyes of men the fatal results of a worldly life, so that suicide itself came to be viewed as a justifiable way to avoid evils that are hard to be borne; in short, it was a religion which, though joyous, was without hope, and with innumerable deities was without God in the world,—which was no religion at all, but a fable, a delusion, and a superstition, as Paul argued before the assembled intellect of the most fastidious and cultivated city of the world.

And yet we see among those who worshipped the gods of Greece a sense of dependence on supernatural power; and this dependence stands out, both in the Iliad and the Odyssey, among the boldest heroes. They seem to be reverential to the powers above them, however indefinite their views. In the best ages of Greece the worship of the various deities was sincere

and universal, and was attended with sacrifices to propitiate favor or avert their displeasure.

It does not appear that these sacrifices were always offered by priests. Warriors, kings, and heroes themselves sacrificed oxen, sheep, and goats, and poured out libations to the gods. Homer's heroes were very strenuous in the exercise of these duties; and they generally traced their calamities and misfortunes to the neglect of sacrifices, which was a great offence to the deities, from Zeus down to inferior gods. We read, too, that the gods were supplicated in fervent prayer. There was universally felt, in earlier times, a need of divine protection. If the gods did not confer eternal life, they conferred, it was supposed, temporal and worldly good. People prayed for the same blessings that the ancient Jews sought from Jehovah. In this sense the early Greeks were religious. Irreverence toward the gods was extremely rare. The people, however, did not pray for divine guidance in the discharge of duty, but for the blessings which would give them health and prosperity. We seldom see a proud self-reliance even among the heroes of the Iliad, but great solicitude to secure aid from the deities they worshipped.

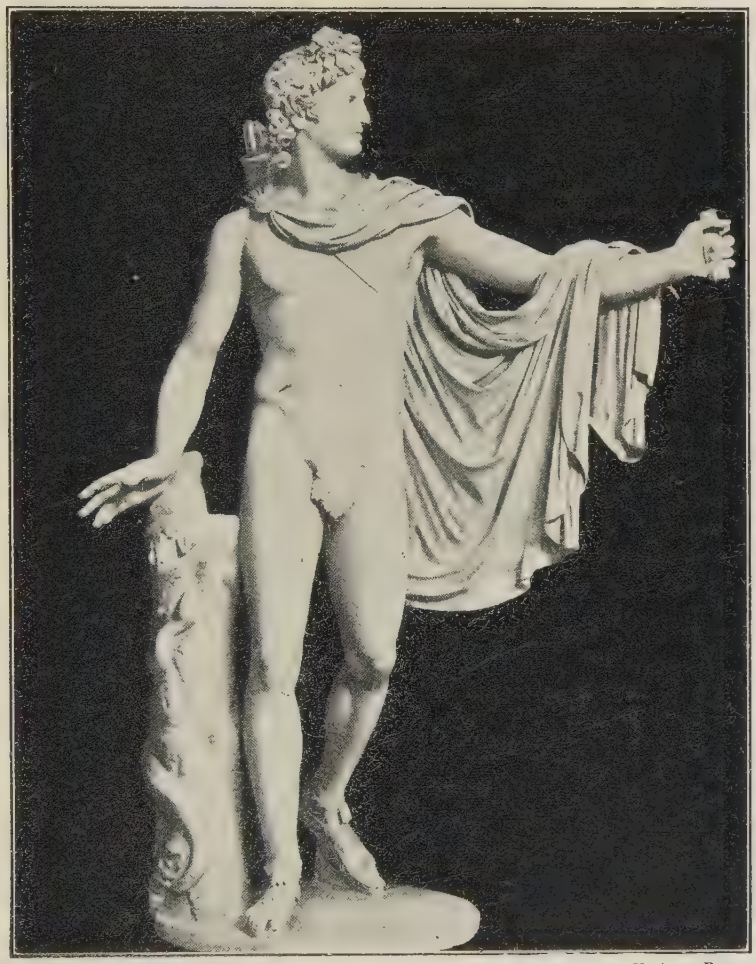
The religion of the Romans differed in some respects from that of the Greeks, inasmuch as it was emphatically a state religion. It was more of a ritual and a

ceremony. It included most of the deities of the Greek Pantheon, but was more comprehensive. It accepted the gods of all the nations that composed the empire, and placed them in the Pantheon, — even Mithra, the Persian sun-god, and the Isis and Osiris of the Egyptians, to whom sacrifices were made by those who worshipped them at home. It was also a purer mythology, and rejected many of the blasphemous myths concerning the loves and quarrels of the Grecian deities. It was more practical and less poetical. Every Roman god had something to do, some useful office to perform. Several divinities presided over the birth and nursing of an infant, and they were worshipped for some fancied good, for the benefits which they were supposed to bestow. There was an elaborate "division of labor" among them. A divinity presided over bakers, another over ovens, — every vocation and every household transaction had its presiding deities.

There were more superstitious rites practised by the Romans than by the Greeks, — such as examining the entrails of beasts and birds for good or bad omens. Great attention was given to dreams and rites of divination. The Roman household gods were of great account, since there was a more defined and general worship of ancestors than among the Greeks. These were the *Penates*, or familiar household gods,

the guardians of the home, whose fire on the sacred hearth was perpetually burning, and to whom every meal was esteemed a sacrifice. These included a *Lar*, or ancestral family divinity, in each house. There were Vestal virgins to guard the most sacred places. There was a college of pontiffs to regulate worship and perform the higher ceremonies, which were complicated and minute. The pontiffs were presided over by one called Pontifex Maximus, — a title shrewdly assumed by Cæsar to gain control of the popular worship, and still surviving in the title of the Pope of Rome with his college of cardinals. There were augurs and haruspices to discover the will of the gods, according to entrails and the flight of birds.

The festivals were more numerous in Rome than in Greece, and perhaps were more piously observed. About one day in four was set apart for the worship of particular gods, celebrated by feasts and games and sacrifices. The principal feast days were in honor of Janus, the great god of the Sabines, the god of beginnings, celebrated on the first of January, to which month he gave his name; also the feasts in honor of the Penates, of Mars, of Vesta, of Minerva, of Venus, of Ceres, of Juno, of Jupiter, and of Saturn. The Saturnalia, December 19, in honor of Saturn, the annual Thanksgiving, lasted seven days, when the rich kept open house and slaves had their liberty, —



From a photograph of the statue in the Vatican, Rome

APOLLO BELVEDERE

the most joyous of the festivals. The feast of Minerva lasted five days, when offerings were made by all mechanics, artists, and scholars. The feast of Cybele, analogous to that of Ceres in Greece and Isis in Egypt, lasted six days. These various feasts imposed great contributions on the people, and were managed by the pontiffs with the most minute observances and legalities.

The principal Roman divinities were the Olympic gods under Latin names, like Jupiter, Juno, Mars, Minerva Neptune, Vesta, Apollo, Venus, Ceres, and Diana; but the secondary deities were almost innumerable. Some of the deities were of Etruscan, some of Sabine, and some of Latin origin; but most of them were imported from Greece or corresponded with those of the Greek mythology. Many were manufactured by the pontiffs for utilitarian purposes, and were mere abstractions, like Hope, Fear, Concord, Justice, Clemency, etc., to which temples were erected. The powers of Nature were also worshipped, like the sun, the moon, and stars. The best side of Roman life was represented in the worship of Vesta, who presided over the household fire and home, and was associated with the Lares and Penates. Of these household gods the head of the family was the officiating minister who offered prayers and sacrifices. The Vestal virgins received especial honor, and were appointed by the Pontifex Maximus.

Thus the Romans accounted themselves very religious, and doubtless are to be so accounted, certainly in the same sense as were the Athenians by the Apostle Paul, since altars, statues, and temples in honor of gods were everywhere present to the eye, and rites and ceremonies were most systematically and mechanically observed according to strict rules laid down by the pontiffs. They were grave and decorous in their devotions, and seemed anxious to learn from their augurs and haruspices the will of the gods; and their funeral ceremonies were held with great pomp and ceremony. As faith in the gods declined, ceremonies and pomps were multiplied, and the ice of ritualism accumulated on the banks of piety. Superstition and unbelief went hand in hand. Worship in the temples was most imposing when the amours and follies of the gods were most ridiculed in the theatres; and as the State was rigorous in its religious observances, hypocrisy became the vice of the most prominent and influential citizens. What sincerity was there in Julius Cæsar when he discharged the duties of high-priest of the Republic? It was impossible for an educated Roman who read Plato and Zeno to believe in Janus and Juno. It was all very well for the people so to believe, he said, who must be kept in order; but scepticism increased in the higher classes until the prevailing atheism culminated

in the poetry of Lucretius, who had the boldness to declare that faith in the gods had been the curse of the human race.

If the Romans were more devoted to mere external and ritualistic services than the Greeks, — more outwardly religious, — they were also more hypocritical. If they were not professed freethinkers, — for the State did not tolerate opposition or ridicule of those things which it instituted or patronized, — religion had but little practical effect on their lives. The Romans were more immoral yet more observant of religious ceremonies than the Greeks, who acted and thought as they pleased. Intellectual independence was not one of the characteristics of the Roman citizen. He professed to think as the State prescribed, for the masters of the world were the slaves of the State in religion as in war. The Romans were more gross in their vices as they were more pharisaical in their profession than the Greeks, whom they conquered and imitated. Neither the sincere worship of ancestors, nor the ceremonies and rites which they observed in honor of their innumerable divinities, softened the severity of their character, or weakened their passion for war and bloody sports. Their hard and rigid wills were rarely moved by the cries of agony or the shrieks of despair. Their slavery was more cruel than among any nation of antiquity. Butchery and legalized murder were the

delight of Romans in their conquering days, as were inhuman sports in the days of their political decline. Where was the spirit of religion, as it was even in India and Egypt, when women were debased; when every man and woman held a human being in cruel bondage; when home was abandoned for the circus and the amphitheatre; when the cry of the mourner was unheard in shouts of victory; when women sold themselves as wives to those who would pay the highest price, and men abstained from marriage unless they could fatten on rich dowries; when utility was the spring of every action, and demoralizing pleasure was the universal pursuit; when feastings and banquets were riotous and expensive, and violence and rapine were restrained only by the strong arm of law dictated by instincts of self-preservation? Where was the ennobling influence of the gods, when nobody of any position finally believed in them? How powerless the gods, when the general depravity was so glaring as to call out the terrible invective of Paul, the cosmopolitan traveller, the shrewd observer, the pure-hearted Christian missionary, indicting not a few, but a whole people: "Who exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, . . . being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit,

malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affections, unmerciful." An awful picture, but sustained by the evidence of the Roman writers of that day as certainly no worse than the hideous reality.

If this was the outcome of the most exquisitely poetical and art-inspiring mythology the world has ever known, what wonder that the pure spirituality of Jesus the Christ, shining into that blackness of darkness, should have been hailed by perishing millions as the "light of the world"!

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CONFUCIUS:

SAGE AND MORALIST.

550–478 B. C.

CONFUCIUS.

SAGE AND MORALIST.

ABOUT one hundred years after the great religious movement in India under Buddha, a man was born in China who inaugurated a somewhat similar movement there, and who impressed his character and principles on three hundred millions of people. It cannot be said that he was the founder of a new religion, since he aimed only to revive what was ancient. To quote his own words, he was "a transmitter, and not a maker." But he was, nevertheless, a very extraordinary character; and if greatness is to be measured by results, I know of no heathen teacher whose work has been so permanent. In genius, in creative power, he was inferior to many; but in influence he has had no equal among the sages of the world.

"Confucius" is a Latin name given him by Jesuit missionaries in China; his real name was K'ung-foo-tseu. He was born about 550 B.C., in the province

of Loo, and was the contemporary of Belshazzar, of Cyrus, of Crœsus, and of Pisistratus. It is claimed that Confucius was a descendant of one of the early emperors of China, of the Chow dynasty, 1121 B. C.; but he was simply of an upper-class family of the State of Loo, one of the provinces of the empire, — his father and grandfather having been prime ministers to the reigning princes or dukes of Loo, which State resembled a feudal province of France in the Middle Ages, acknowledging only a nominal fealty to the Emperor.

We know but little of the early condition of China. The earliest record of events which can be called history takes us back to about 2350 B. C., when Yaou was emperor, — an intelligent and benignant prince, uniting under his sway the different States of China, which had even then reached a considerable civilization, for the legendary or mythical history of the country dates back about five thousand years. Yaou's son Shun was an equally remarkable man, wise and accomplished, who lived only to advance the happiness of his subjects. At that period the religion of China was probably monotheistic. The supreme being was called Shang-te, to whom sacrifices were made, a deity who exercised a superintending care of the universe; but corruptions rapidly crept in, and a worship of the powers of Nature and of the spirits of departed ancestors, who were supposed to guard the welfare of

their descendants, became the prevailing religion. During the reigns of these good emperors the standard of morality was high throughout the empire.

But morals declined, — the old story in all the States of the ancient world. In addition to the decline in morals, there were political discords and endless wars between the petty princes of the empire.

To remedy the political and moral evils of his time was the great desire and endeavor of Confucius. The most marked feature in the religion of the Chinese, before his time, was the worship of ancestors, and this worship he did not seek to change. "Confucius taught three thousand disciples, of whom the more eminent became influential authors. Like Plato and Xenophon, they recorded the sayings of their master, and his maxims and arguments preserved in their works were afterward added to the national collection of the sacred books called the 'Nim Classes.'"

Confucius was a mere boy when his father died, and we know next to nothing of his early years. At fifteen years of age, however, we are told that he devoted himself to learning, pursuing his studies under considerable difficulties, his family being poor. He married when he was nineteen years of age; and in the following year was born his son Le, his only child, of whose descendants eleven thousand males were living one hundred and fifty years ago, constituting

the only hereditary nobility of China, — a class who for seventy generations were the recipients of the highest honors and privileges. On the birth of Le, the duke Ch'aou of Loo sent Confucius a present of a carp, which seems to indicate that he was already distinguished for his attainments.

At twenty years of age Confucius entered upon political duties, being the superintendent of cattle, from which, for his fidelity and ability, he was promoted to the higher office of distributer of grain, having attracted the attention of his sovereign. At twenty-two he began his labors as a public teacher, and his house became the resort of enthusiastic youth who wished to learn the doctrines of antiquity. These were all that the sage undertook to teach, — not new and original doctrines of morality or political economy, but only such as were established from a remote antiquity, going back two thousand years before he was born. There is no improbability in this alleged antiquity of the Chinese Empire, for Egypt at this time was a flourishing State.

At twenty-nine years of age Confucius gave his attention to music, which he studied under a famous master; and to this art he devoted no small part of his life, writing books and treatises upon it. Six years afterward, at thirty-five, he had a great desire to travel; and the reigning duke, in whose service

he was as a high officer of state, put at his disposal a carriage and two horses, to visit the court of the Emperor, whose sovereignty, however, was only nominal. It does not appear that Confucius was received with much distinction, nor did he have much intercourse with the court or the ministers. He was a mere seeker of knowledge, an inquirer about the ceremonies and maxims of the founder of the dynasty of Chow, an observer of customs, like Herodotus. He wandered for eight years among the various provinces of China, teaching as he went, but without making a great impression. Moreover, he was regarded with jealousy by the different ministers of princes; one of them, however, struck with his wisdom and knowledge, wished to retain him in his service.

On the return of Confucius to Loo, he remained fifteen years without official employment, his native province being in a state of anarchy. But he was better employed than in serving princes, prosecuting his researches into poetry, history, ceremonies, and music, — a born scholar, with insatiable desire of knowledge. His great gifts and learning, however, did not allow him to remain without public employment. He was made governor of an important city. As chief magistrate of this city, he made a marvellous change in the manners of the people. The duke, surprised at what he saw, asked if his rules could

be employed to govern a whole State; and Confucius told him that they could be applied to the government of the Empire. On this the duke appointed him assistant superintendent of Public Works, — a great office, held only by members of the ducal family. So many improvements did Confucius make in agriculture that he was made minister of Justice; and so wonderful was his management, that soon there was no necessity to put the penal laws in execution, since no offenders could be found. Confucius held his high office as minister of Justice for two years longer, and some suppose he was made prime minister. His authority certainly continued to increase. He exalted the sovereign, depressed the ministers, and weakened private families, — just as Richelieu did in France, strengthening the throne at the expense of the nobility. It would thus seem that his political reforms were in the direction of absolute monarchy, a needed force in times of anarchy and demoralization. So great was his fame as a statesman that strangers came from other States to see him.

These reforms in the state of Loo gave annoyance to the neighboring princes; and to undermine the influence of Confucius with the duke, these princes sent the duke a present of eighty beautiful girls, possessing musical and dancing accomplishments, and also one hundred and twenty splendid horses. As the duke

soon came to think more of his girls and horses than of his reforms, Confucius became disgusted, resigned his office, and retired to private life. Then followed thirteen years of homeless wandering. He was now fifty-six years of age, depressed and melancholy in view of his failure with princes. He was accompanied in his travels by some of his favorite disciples, to whom he communicated his wisdom.

But his fame preceded him wherever he journeyed, and such was the respect for his character and teachings that he was loaded with presents by the people, and was left unmolested to do as he pleased. The dissoluteness of courts filled him with indignation and disgust; and he was heard to exclaim on one occasion, "I have not seen one who loves virtue as he loves beauty," — meaning the beauty of women. The love of the beautiful, in an artistic sense, is a Greek and not an Oriental idea.

In the meantime Confucius continued his wanderings from city to city and State to State, with a chosen band of disciples, all of whom became famous. He travelled for the pursuit of knowledge, and to impress the people with his doctrines. A certain one of his followers was questioned by a prince as to the merits and peculiarities of his master, but was afraid to give a true answer. The sage hearing of it, said, "You should have told him, He is simply a man who in his

eager pursuit of knowledge forgets his food, who in the joy of his attainments forgets his sorrows, and who does not perceive that old age is coming on." How seldom is it that any man reaches such a height! In a single sentence the philosopher describes himself truly and impressively.

At last, in the year 491 B. C., a new sovereign reigned in Loo, and with costly presents invited Confucius to return to his native State. The philosopher was now sixty-nine years of age, and notwithstanding the respect in which he was held, the world cannot be said to have dealt kindly with him. It is the fate of prophets and sages to be rejected. The world will not bear rebukes. Even a friend, if discreet, will rarely venture to tell another friend his faults. Confucius told the truth when pressed, but he does not seem to have courted martyrdom; and his manners and speech were too bland, too proper, too unobtrusive to give much offence. Luther was aided in his reforms by his very roughness and boldness, but he was surrounded by a different class of people from those whom Confucius sought to influence. Conventional, polite, considerate, and a great respecter of persons in authority was the Chinese sage. A rude, abrupt, and fierce reformer would have had no weight with the most courteous and polite people of whom history speaks; whose manners twenty-five hundred years

ago were substantially the same as they are at the present day, — a people governed by the laws of propriety alone.

The few remaining years of Confucius' life were spent in revising his writings; but his latter days were made melancholy by dwelling on the evils of the world that he could not remove. Disappointment also had made him cynical and bitter, like Solomon of old, although from different causes. He survived his son and his most beloved disciples. As he approached the dark valley he uttered no prayer, and betrayed no apprehension. Death to him was a rest. He died at the age of seventy-three.

In the tenth book of his Analects we get a glimpse of the habits of the philosopher. He was a man of rule and ceremony. He was particular about his dress and appearance. He was no ascetic, but moderate and temperate. He lived chiefly on rice, like the rest of his countrymen, but required to have his rice cooked nicely, and his meat cut properly. He drank wine freely, but was never known to have obscured his faculties by this indulgence. I do not read that tea was then in use. He was charitable and hospitable, but not ostentatious. He generally travelled in a carriage with two horses, driven by one of his disciples; but a carriage in those days was like

one of our carts. In his village, it is said, he looked simple and sincere, as if he were one not able to speak; when waiting at court, or speaking with officers of an inferior grade, he spoke freely, but in a straightforward manner; with officers of a higher grade he spoke blandly, but precisely; with the prince he was grave, but self-possessed. When eating he did not converse; when in bed he did not speak. If his mat were not straight he did not sit on it. When a friend sent him a present he did not bow; the only present for which he bowed was that of the flesh of sacrifice. He was capable of excessive grief, with all his placidity. When his favorite pupil died, he exclaimed, "Heaven is destroying me!" His disciples on this said, "Sir, your grief is excessive." "It is excessive," he replied. "If I am not to mourn bitterly for this man, for whom should I mourn?"

The reigning prince of Loo caused a temple to be erected over the remains of Confucius, and the number of his disciples continually increased. The emperors of the falling dynasty of Chow had neither the intelligence nor the will to do honor to the departed philosopher, but the emperors of the succeeding dynasties did all they could to perpetuate his memory. During his life Confucius found ready acceptance for his doctrines, and was everywhere revered among the people, though not uniformly appreciated by the rulers, nor

able permanently to establish the reforms he inaugurated. After his death, however, no honor was too great to be rendered him. The most splendid temple in China was built over his grave, and he received a homage little removed from worship. His writings became a sacred rule of faith and practice; schools were based upon them, and scholars devoted themselves to their interpretation. For two thousand years Confucius has reigned supreme, — the undisputed teacher of a population of three or four hundred millions.

Confucius must be regarded as a man of great humility, conscious of infirmities and faults, but striving after virtue and perfection. He said of himself, "I have striven to become a man of perfect virtue, and to teach others without weariness; but the character of the superior man, carrying out in his conduct what he professes, is what I have not attained to. I am not one born in the possession of knowledge, but I am one who is fond of antiquity, and earnest in seeking it there. I am a transmitter, and not a maker." If he did not lay claim to divine illumination, he felt that he was born into the world for a special purpose; not to declare new truths, not to initiate any new ceremony, but to confirm what he felt was in danger of being lost, — the most conservative of all known reformers.

Confucius left behind voluminous writings, of which his Analects, his book of Poetry, his book of History, and his Rules of Propriety are the most important. It is these which are now taught, and have been taught for two thousand years, in the schools and colleges of China. The Chinese think that no man so great and perfect as he has ever lived. His writings are held in the same veneration that Christians attach to their own sacred literature. There is this one fundamental difference between the authors of the Bible and the Chinese sage, — that he did not like to talk of spiritual things; indeed, of them he was ignorant, professing no interest in relation to the working out of abstruse questions, either of philosophy or theology. He had no taste or capacity for such inquiries. Hence, he did not aspire to throw any new light on the great problems of human condition and destiny; nor did he speculate, like the Ionian philosophers, on the creation or end of things. He was not troubled about the origin or destiny of man. He meddled neither with physics nor metaphysics, but he earnestly and consistently strove to bring to light and to enforce those principles which had made remote generations wise and virtuous. He confined his attention to outward phenomena, — to the world of sense and matter; to forms, precedents, ceremonies, proprieties, rules of conduct, filial duties,

and duties to the State; enjoining temperance, honesty, and sincerity as the cardinal and fundamental laws of private and national prosperity. He was no prophet of wrath, though living in a corrupt age. He utters no anathemas on princes, and no woes on peoples. Nor does he glow with exalted hopes of a millennium of bliss, or of the beatitudes of a future state. He was not stern and indignant like Elijah, but more like the courtier and counsellor Elisha. He was a man of the world, and all his teachings have reference to respectability in the world's regard. He doubted more than he believed.

And yet in many of his sayings Confucius rises to an exalted height, considering his age and circumstances. Some of them remind us of some of the best Proverbs of Solomon. In general, we should say that to his mind filial piety and fraternal submission were the foundation of all virtuous practices, and absolute obedience to rulers the primal principle of government. He was eminently a peace man, discouraging wars and violence. He was liberal and tolerant in his views. He said that the "superior man is catholic and no partisan." Duke Gae asked, "What should be done to secure the submission of the people?" The sage replied, "Advance the upright, and set aside the crooked; then the people will submit. But advance the crooked, and set aside the upright, and the people will not submit." Again

he said, "It is virtuous manners which constitute the excellence of a neighborhood; therefore fix your residence where virtuous manners prevail." The following sayings remind me of Epictetus: "A scholar whose mind is set on truth, and who is ashamed of bad clothes and bad food, is not fit to be discoursed with. A man should say, 'I am not concerned that I have no place, — I am concerned how I may fit myself for one. I am not concerned that I am not known; I seek to be worthy to be known.'" Here Confucius looks to the essence of things, not to popular desires. In the following, on the other hand, he shows his prudence and policy: "In serving a prince, frequent remonstrances lead to disgrace; between friends, frequent reproofs make the friendship distant." Thus he talks like Solomon. "Tsae-yu, one of his disciples, being asleep in the day-time, the master said, 'Rotten wood cannot be carved. This Yu — what is the use of my reproving him?'" Of a virtuous prince, he said: "In his conduct of himself, he was humble; in serving his superiors, he was respectful; in nourishing the people, he was kind; in ordering the people, he was just."

It was discussed among his followers what it is to be distinguished. One said: "It is to be heard of through the family and State." The master replied: "That is notoriety, not distinction." Again he said: "Though

a man may be able to recite three hundred odes, yet if when intrusted with office he does not know how to act, of what practical use is his poetical knowledge?" Again, "If a minister cannot rectify himself, what has he to do with rectifying others?" There is great force in this saying: "The superior man is easy to serve and difficult to please, since you cannot please him in any way which is not accordant with right; but the mean man is difficult to serve and easy to please. The superior man has a dignified ease without pride; the mean man has pride without a dignified ease." A disciple asked him what qualities a man must possess to entitle him to be called a scholar. The master said: "He must be earnest, urgent, and bland, — among his friends earnest and urgent, among his brethren bland." And, "The scholar who cherishes a love of comfort is not fit to be deemed a scholar." "If a man," he said, "take no thought about what is distant, he will find sorrow near at hand." And again, "He who requires much from himself and little from others, he will keep himself from being an object of resentment." These proverbs remind us of Bacon: "Specious words confound virtue." "Want of forbearance in small matters confound great plans." "Virtue," the master said, "is more to man than either fire or water. I have seen men die from treading on water or fire, but I have never seen a man die

from treading the course of virtue." This is a lofty sentiment, but I think it is not in accordance with the records of martyrdom. "There are three things," he continued, "which the superior man guards against: In youth he guards against his passions, in manhood against quarrelsomeness, and in old age against covetousness."

I do not find anything in the sayings of Confucius that can be called cynical, such as we find in some of the Proverbs of Solomon, even in reference to women, where women were, as in most Oriental countries, despised. The most that approaches cynicism is in such a remark as this: "I have not yet seen one who could perceive his faults and inwardly accuse himself." His definition of perfect virtue is above that of Paley: "The man of virtue makes the difficulty to be overcome his first business, and success only a secondary consideration." Throughout his writings there is no praise of success without virtue, and no disparagement of want of success with virtue. Nor have I found in his sayings a sentiment which may be called demoralizing. He always takes the higher ground, and with all his ceremony ever exalts inward purity above all external appearances. There is a quaint common-sense in some of his writings which reminds one of the sayings of Abraham Lincoln. For instance: One of his disciples asked, "If you had the conduct of armies,

whom would you have to act with you?" The master replied: "I would not have him to act with me who will unarmed attack a tiger, or cross a river without a boat." Here something like wit and irony break out: "A man of the village said, 'Great is K'ung the philosopher; his learning is extensive, and yet he does not render his name famous by any particular thing.' The master heard this observation, and said to his disciples: 'What shall I practise, charioteering or archery? I will practise charioteering.'"

When the Duke of Loo asked about government, the master said: "Good government exists when those who are near are made happy, and when those who are far off are attracted." When the Duke questioned him again on the same subject, he replied: "Go before the people with your example, and be laborious in their affairs. . . . Pardon small faults, and raise to office men of virtue and talents." "But how shall I know the men of virtue?" asked the duke. "Raise to office those whom you do know." The key to his political philosophy seems to be this: "A man who knows how to govern himself, knows how to govern others; and he who knows how to govern other men, knows how to govern an empire." "The art of government," he said, "is to keep its affairs before the mind without weariness, and to practise them with undeviating constancy. . . . To govern

means to rectify. If you lead on the people with correctness, who will not dare to be correct?" This is one of his favorite principles; namely, the force of a good example, — as when the reigning prince asked him how to do away with thieves, he replied: "If you, Sir, were not covetous, although you should reward them to do it, they would not steal." This was not intended as a rebuke to the prince, but an illustration of the force of a great example. Confucius rarely openly rebuked any one, especially a prince, whom it was his duty to venerate for his office. He contented himself with enforcing principles. Here his moderation and great courtesy are seen.

Confucius sometimes soared to the highest morality known to the Pagan world. Chung-kung asked about perfect virtue. The master said: "It is when you go abroad, to behave to every one as if you were receiving a great guest, to have no murmuring against you in the country and family, and not to do to others as you would not wish done to yourself. . . . The superior man has neither anxiety nor fear. Let him never fail reverentially to order his own conduct, and let him be respectful to others and observant of propriety; then all within the four seas will be brothers. . . . Hold faithfulness and sincerity as first principles, and be moving continually to what is right." Fan-Chi

asked about benevolence; the master said: "It is to love all men." Another asked about friendship. Confucius replied: "Faithfully admonish your friend, and kindly try to lead him. If you find him impracticable, stop. Do not disgrace yourself." This saying reminds us of that of our great Master: "Cast not your pearls before swine." There is no greater folly than in making oneself disagreeable without any probability of reformation. Some one asked: "What do you say about the treatment of injuries?" The master answered: "Recompense injury with justice, and recompense kindness with kindness." Here again he was not far from the greater Teacher on the Mount. "When a man's knowledge is sufficient to attain and his virtue is not sufficient to hold, whatever he may have gained he will lose again." One of the favorite doctrines of Confucius was the superiority of the ancients to the men of his day. Said he: "The high-mindedness of antiquity showed itself in a disregard of small things; that of the present day shows itself in license. The stern dignity of antiquity showed itself in grave reserve; that of the present shows itself in quarrelsome perverseness. The policy of antiquity showed itself in straightforwardness; that of the present in deceit." The following is a saying worthy of Montaigne: "Of all people, girls and servants are the most difficult to behave to. If you are familiar with them, they lose

their humility; if you maintain reserve to them, they are discontented."

Such are some of the sayings of Confucius, on account of which he was regarded as the wisest of his countrymen; and as his conduct was in harmony with his principles, he was justly revered as a pattern of morality. The greatest virtues which he enjoined were sincerity, truthfulness, and obedience to duty whatever may be the sacrifice; to do right because it is right and not because it is expedient; filial piety extending to absolute reverence; and an equal reverence for rulers. He had no theology; he confounded God with heaven and earth. He says nothing about divine providence; he believed in nothing supernatural. He thought little and said less about a future state of rewards and punishments. His morality was elevated, but not supernal. We infer from his writings that his age was degenerate and corrupt, but, as we have already said, his reproofs were gentle. Blandness of speech and manners was his distinguishing outward peculiarity; and this seems to characterize his nation, — whether learned from him, or whether an inborn national peculiarity, I do not know. He went through great trials most creditably, but he was no martyr. He constantly complained that his teachings fell on listless ears, which made him sad and discouraged; but he never flagged in his labors to improve his generation. He

After a drawing by F. Frenzeny

ANCESTOR WORSHIP IN A CHINESE GRAVEYARD

had no egotism, but great self-respect, reminding us of Michael Angelo. He was humble but full of dignity, serene though distressed, cheerful but not hilarious. Were he to live among us now, we should call him a perfect gentleman, with aristocratic sympathies, but more autocratic in his views of government and society than aristocratic. He seems to have loved the people, and was kind, even respectful, to everybody. When he visited a school, it is said that he arose in quiet deference to speak to the children, since some of the boys, he thought, would probably be distinguished and powerful at no distant day. He was also remarkably charitable, and put a greater value on virtues and abilities than upon riches and honors. Though courted by princes he would not serve them in violation of his self-respect, asked no favors, and returned their presents. If he did not live above the world, he adorned the world. We cannot compare his teachings with those of Christ; they are immeasurably inferior in loftiness and spirituality; but they are worldly wise and decorous, and are on an equality with those of Solomon in moral wisdom. They are wonderfully adapted to a people who are conservative of their institutions, and who have more respect for tradition than for progress.

The worship of ancestors is closely connected with veneration for parental authority; and with absolute obedience to parents is allied absolute obedience to the

Emperor as head of the State. Hence, the writings of Confucius have tended to cement the Chinese imperial power, — in which fact we may perhaps find the secret of his extraordinary posthumous influence. No wonder that emperors and rulers have revered and honored his memory, and used the power of the State to establish his doctrines. Moreover, his exaltation of learning as a necessity for rulers has tended to put all the offices of the realm into the hands of scholars. There never was a country where scholars have been and still are so generally employed by Government. And as men of learning are conservative in their sympathies, so they generally are fond of peace and detest war. Hence, under the influence of scholars the policy of the Chinese Government has always been mild and pacific. It is even paternal. It has more similarity to the governments of a remote antiquity than that of any existing nation. Thus is the influence of Confucius seen in the stability of government and of conservative institutions, as well as in decency in the affairs of life, and gentleness and courtesy of manners. Above all is his influence seen in the employment of men of learning and character in the affairs of state and in all the offices of government, as the truest guardians of whatever tends to exalt a State and make it respectable and stable, if not powerful for war or daring in deeds of violence.

Confucius was essentially a statesman as well as a moralist; but his political career was an apparent failure, since few princes listened to his instructions. Yet if he was lost to his contemporaries, he has been preserved by posterity. Perhaps there never lived a man so worshipped by posterity who had so slight a following by the men of his own time, — unless we liken him to that greatest of all Prophets, who, being despised and rejected, is, and is to be, the "headstone of the corner" in the rebuilding of humanity. Confucius says so little about the subjects that interested the people of China that some suppose he had no religion at all. Nor did he mention but once in his writings Shang-te, the supreme deity of his remote ancestors; and he deduced nothing from the worship of him. And yet there are expressions in his sayings which seem to show that he believed in a supreme power. He often spoke of Heaven, and loved to walk in the heavenly way. Heaven to him was Destiny, by the power of which the world was created. By Heaven the virtuous are rewarded, and the guilty are punished. Out of love for the people, Heaven appoints rulers to protect and instruct them. Prayer is unnecessary, because Heaven does not actively interfere with the soul of man.

Confucius was philosophical and consistent in the all-pervading principle by which he insisted upon the

common source of power in government, — of the State, of the family, and of one's self. Self-knowledge and self-control he maintained to be the fountain of all personal virtue and attainment in performance of the moral duties owed to others, whether above or below in social standing. He supposed that all men are born equally good, but that the temptations of the world at length destroy the original rectitude. The "superior man," who next to the "sage" holds the highest place in the Confucian humanity, conquers the evil in the world, though subject to infirmities; his acts are guided by the laws of propriety, and are marked by strict sincerity. Confucius admitted that he himself had failed to reach the level of the superior man. This admission may have been the result of his extraordinary humility and modesty.

In "The Great Learning" Confucius lays down the rules to enable one to become a superior man. The foundation of his rules is in the investigation of things, or *knowledge*, with which virtue is indissolubly connected, — as in the ethics of Socrates. He maintained that no attainment can be made, and no virtue can remain untainted, without learning. "Without this, benevolence becomes folly, sincerity recklessness, straightforwardness rudeness, and firmness foolishness." But mere accumulation of facts was not knowledge, for "learning without thought is labor lost; and thought

without learning is perilous." Complete wisdom was to be found only among the ancient sages; by no mental endeavor could any man hope to equal the supreme wisdom of Yaou and of Shun. The object of learning, he said, should be truth; and the combination of learning with a firm will, will surely lead a man to virtue. Virtue must be free from all hypocrisy and guile.

The next step towards perfection is the *cultivation of the person,* — which must begin with introspection, and ends in harmonious outward expression. Every man must guard his thoughts, words, and actions; and conduct must agree with words. By words the superior man directs others; but in order to do this his words must be sincere. It by no means follows, however, that virtue is the invariable concomitant of plausible speech.

The height of virtue is *filial piety;* for this is connected indissolubly with loyalty to the sovereign, who is the father of his people and the preserver of the State. Loyalty to the sovereign is synonymous with duty, and is outwardly shown by obedience. Next to parents, all superiors should be the object of reverence. This reverence, it is true, should be reciprocal; a sovereign forfeits all right to reverence and obedience when he ceases to be a minister of good. But then, only the man who has developed virtues in himself is

considered competent to rule a family or a State; for the same virtues which enable a man to rule the one, will enable him to rule the other. No man can teach others who cannot teach his own family. The greatest stress, as we have seen, is laid by Confucius on filial piety, which consists in obedience to authority, — in serving parents according to propriety, that is, with the deepest affection, and the father of the State with loyalty. But while it is incumbent on a son to obey the wishes of his parents, it is also a part of his duty to remonstrate with them should they act contrary to the rules of propriety. All remonstrances, however, must be made humbly. Should these remonstrances fail, the son must mourn in silence the obduracy of the parents. He carried the obligations of filial piety so far as to teach that a son should conceal the immorality of a father, forgetting the distinction of right and wrong. Brotherly love is the sequel of filial piety. "Happy," says he, "is the union with wife and children; it is like the music of lutes and harps. The love which binds brother to brother is second only to that which is due from children to parents. It consists in mutual friendship, joyful harmony, and dutiful obedience on the part of the younger to the elder brothers."

While obedience is exacted to an elder brother and to parents, Confucius said but little respecting the ties which should bind husband and wife. He had but

little respect for woman, and was divorced from his wife after living with her for a year. He looked on women as every way inferior to men, and only to be endured as necessary evils. It was not until a woman became a mother, that she was treated with respect in China. Hence, according to Confucius, the great object of marriage is to increase the family, especially to give birth to sons. Women could be lawfully and properly divorced who had no children, — which put women completely in the power of men, and reduced them to the condition of slaves. The failure to recognize the sanctity of marriage is the great blot on the system of Confucius as a scheme of morals.

But the sage exalts friendship. Everybody, from the Emperor downward, must have friends; and the best friends are those allied by ties of blood. "Friends," said he, "are wealth to the poor, strength to the weak, and medicine to the sick." One of the strongest bonds to friendship is literature and literary exertion. Men are enjoined by Confucius to make friends among the most virtuous of scholars, even as they are enjoined to take service under the most worthy of great officers. In the intercourse of friends, the most unbounded sincerity and frankness is imperatively enjoined. "He who is not trusted by his friends will not gain the confidence of the sovereign, and he who is not obedient to parents will not be trusted by friends."

Everything is subordinated to the State; but, on the other hand, the family, friends, culture, virtue, — the good of the people, — is the main object of good government. "No virtue," said Emperor Kuh, 2435 B. C., "is higher than love to all men, and there is no loftier aim in government than to profit all men." When he was asked what should be done for the people, he replied, "Enrich them;" and when asked what more should be done, he replied, "Teach them." On these two principles the whole philosophy of the sage rested, — the temporal welfare of the people, and their education. He laid great stress on knowledge, as leading to virtue; and on virtue, as leading to prosperity. He made the profession of a teacher the most honorable calling to which a citizen could aspire. He himself was a teacher. All sages are teachers, though all teachers are not sages.

Confucius enlarged upon the necessity of having good men in office. The officials of his day excited his contempt, and reciprocally scorned his teachings. It was in contrast to these officials that he painted the ideal times of Kings Wan and Woo. The two motive-powers of government, according to Confucius, are righteousness and the observance of ceremonies. Righteousness is the law of the world, as ceremonies form a rule to the heart. What he meant by ceremonies was rules of propriety, intended to keep all unruly

passions in check, and produce a reverential manner among all classes. Doubtless he over-estimated the force of example, since there are men in every country and community who will be lawless and reckless, in spite of the best models of character and conduct.

The ruling desire of Confucius was to make the whole empire peaceful and happy. The welfare of the people, the right government of the State, and the prosperity of the empire were the main objects of his solicitude. As conducive to these, he touched on many other things incidentally, — such as the encouragement of music, of which he was very fond. He himself summed up the outcome of his rules for conduct in this prohibitive form: "Do not unto others that which you would not have them do to you." Here we have the negative side of the positive "golden rule." Reciprocity, and that alone, was his law of life. He does not inculcate forgiveness of injuries, but exacts a tooth for a tooth, and an eye for an eye.

As to his own personal character, it was nearly faultless. His humility and patience were alike remarkable, and his sincerity and candor were as marked as his humility. He was the most learned man in the empire, yet lamented the deficiency of his knowledge. He even disclaimed the qualities of the superior man, much more those of the sage. "I am," said

he, "not virtuous enough to be free from cares, nor wise enough to be free from anxieties, nor bold enough to be free from fear." He was always ready to serve his sovereign or the State; but he neither grasped office, nor put forward his own merits, nor sought to advance his own interests. He was grave, generous, tolerant, and sincere. He carried into practice all the rules he taught. Poverty was his lot in life, but he never repined at the absence of wealth, or lost the severe dignity which is ever to be associated with wisdom and the force of personal character. Indeed, his greatness was in his character rather than in his genius; and yet I think his genius has been underrated. His greatness is seen in the profound devotion of his followers to him, however lofty their merits or exalted their rank. No one ever disputed his influence and fame; and his moral excellence shines all the brighter in view of the troublous times in which he lived, when warriors occupied the stage, and men of letters were driven behind the scenes.

The literary labors of Confucius were very great, since he made the whole classical literature of China accessible to his countrymen. The fame of all preceding writers is merged in his own renown. His works have had the highest authority for more than two thousand years. They have been regarded as the exponents of supreme wisdom, and adopted as text-books by all

scholars and in all schools in that vast empire, which includes one-fourth of the human race. To all educated men the "Book of Changes" (Yih-King), the "Book of Poetry" (She-King), the "Book of History" (Shoo-King), the "Book of Rites" (Le-King), the "Great Learning" (Ta-heo), showing the parental essence of all government, the "Doctrine of the Mean" (Chung-yung), teaching the "golden mean" of conduct, and the "Confucian Analects" (Lun-yu), recording his conversations, are supreme authorities; to which must be added the Works of Mencius, the greatest of his disciples. There is no record of any books that have exacted such supreme reverence in any nation as the Works of Confucius, except the Koran of the Mohammedans, the Book of the Law among the Hebrews, and the Bible among the Christians. What an influence for one man to have exerted on subsequent ages, who laid no claim to divinity or even originality, — recognized as a man, worshipped as a god!

No sooner had the sun of Confucius set under a cloud (since sovereigns and princes had neglected if they had not scorned his precepts), than his memory and principles were duly honored. But it was not until the accession of the Han dynasty, 206 B. C., that the reigning emperor collected the scattered writings of the sage, and exerted his vast power to secure the study of them throughout the schools of China. It

must be borne in mind that a hostile emperor of the preceding dynasty had ordered the books of Confucius to be burned; but they were secreted by his faithful admirers in the walls of houses and beneath the ground. Succeeding emperors heaped additional honors on the memory of the sage, and in the early part of the sixteenth century an emperor of the Ming dynasty gave him the title which he at present bears in China, — "The perfect sage, the ancient teacher, Confucius." No higher title could be conferred upon him in a land where to be "ancient" is to be revered. For more than twelve hundred years temples have been erected to his honor, and his worship has been universal throughout the empire. His maxims of morality have appealed to human consciousness in every succeeding generation, and carry as much weight today as they did when the Han dynasty made them the standard of human wisdom. They were especially adapted to the Chinese intellect, which although shrewd and ingenious is phlegmatic, unspeculative, matter-of-fact, and unspiritual. Moreover, as we have said, it was to the interest of rulers to support his doctrines, from the constant exhortations to loyalty which Confucius enjoined. And yet there is in his precepts a democratic influence also, since he recognized no other titles or ranks but such as are won by personal merit, — thus opening every office in the State to the learned,

From a photograph

CONFUCIAN TEMPLE: FORBIDDEN CITY, PEKIN

whatever their original social rank. The great political truth that the welfare of the people is the first duty and highest aim of rulers, has endeared the memory of the sage to the unnumbered millions who toil upon the scantiest means of subsistence that have been known in any nation's history.

This essay on the religion of the Chinese would be incomplete without some allusion to one of the contemporaries of Confucius, who spiritually and intellectually was probably his superior, and to whom even Confucius paid extraordinary deference. This man was called Lao-tse, a recluse and philosopher, who was already an old man when Confucius began his travels. He was the founder of Tao-tze, a kind of rationalism, which at present has millions of adherents in China. This old philosopher did not receive Confucius very graciously, since the younger man declared nothing new, only wishing to revive the teachings of ancient sages, while he himself was a great awakener of thought. He was, like Confucius, a politico-ethical teacher, but unlike him sought to lead people back to a state of primitive society before forms and regulations existed. He held that man's nature was good, and that primitive pleasures and virtues were better than worldly wisdom. He maintained that spiritual weapons cannot be formed by laws and regulations, and that prohibiting enactments

tended to increase the evils they were meant to avert. While this great and profound man was in some respects superior to Confucius, his influence has been most seen on the inferior people of China. Taoism rivals Buddhism as the religion of the lower classes, and Taoism combined with Buddhism has more adherents than Confucianism. But the wise, the mighty, and the noble still cling to Confucius as the greatest man whom China has produced.

Of spiritual religion, indeed, the lower millions of Chinese have now but little conception; their nearest approach to any supernaturalism is the worship of deceased ancestors, and their religious observances are the grossest formalism. But as a practical system of morals in the days of its early establishment, the religion of Confucius ranks very high among the best developments of Paganism. Certainly no man ever had a deeper knowledge of his countrymen than he, or adapted his doctrines to the peculiar needs of their social organism with such amazing tact.

It is a remarkable thing that all the religions of antiquity have practically passed away, with their cities and empires, except among the Hindus and Chinese; and it is doubtful if these religions can withstand the changes which foreign conquest and Christian missionary enterprise and civilization are producing. In the East the old religions gave place to Mohamedan-

ism, as in the West they disappeared before the power of Christianity. And these conquering religions retain and extend their hold upon the human mind and human affections by reason of their fundamental principles, — the fatherhood of a personal God, and the brotherhood of universal man. With the ideas prevalent among all sects that God is not only supreme in power, but benevolent in his providence, and that every man has claims and rights which cannot be set aside by kings or rulers or priests, — nations must indefinitely advance in virtue and happiness, as they receive and live by the inspiration of this elevating faith.

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ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY.

SEEKING AFTER TRUTH.

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SEEKING AFTER TRUTH.

WHATEVER may be said of the inferiority of the ancients to the moderns in natural and mechanical science, which no one is disposed to question, or even in the realm of literature, which may be questioned, there was one department of knowledge to which we have added nothing of consequence. In the realm of art they were our equals, and probably our superiors; in philosophy, they carried logical deduction to its utmost limit. They advanced from a few crude speculations on material phenomena to an analysis of all the powers of the mind, and finally to the establishment of ethical principles which even Christianity did not supersede.

The progress of philosophy from Thales to Plato is the most stupendous triumph of the human intellect. The reason of man soared to the loftiest flights that it has ever attained. It cast its searching eye into the most abstruse inquiries which ever tasked

the famous minds of the world. It exhausted all the subjects which dialectical subtlety ever raised. It originated and carried out the boldest speculations respecting the nature of the soul and its future existence. It established important psychological truths and created a method for the solution of abstruse questions. It went on from point to point, until all the faculties of the mind were severely analyzed, and all its operations were subjected to a rigid method. The Romans never added a single principle to the philosophy which the Greeks elaborated; the ingenious scholastics of the Middle Ages merely reproduced Greek ideas; and even the profound and patient Germans have gone round in the same circles that Plato and Aristotle marked out more than two thousand years ago. Only the Brahmans of India have equalled them in intellectual subtilty and acumen. It was Greek philosophy in which noble Roman youths were educated; and hence, as it was expounded by a Cicero, a Marcus Aurelius, and an Epictetus, it was as much the inheritance of the Romans as it was of the Greeks themselves, after Grecian liberties were swept away and Greek cities became a part of the Roman empire. The Romans learned what the Greeks created and taught; and philosophy, as well as art, became identified with the civilization which extended from the Rhine and the Po to the Nile and the Tigris.

Greek philosophy was one of the distinctive features of ancient civilization long after the Greeks had ceased to speculate on the laws of mind or the nature of the soul, on the existence of God or future rewards and punishments. Although it was purely Grecian in its origin and development, it became one of the grand ornaments of the Roman schools. The Romans did not originate medicine, but Galen was one of its greatest lights; they did not invent the hexameter verse, but Virgil sang to its measure; they did not create Ionic capitals, but their cities were ornamented with marble temples on the same principles as those which called out the admiration of Pericles. So, if they did not originate philosophy, and generally had but little taste for it, still its truths were systematized and explained by Cicero, and formed no small accession to the treasures with which cultivated intellects sought everywhere to be enriched. It formed an essential part of the intellectual wealth of the civilized world, when civilization could not prevent the world from falling into decay and ruin. And as it was the noblest triumph which the human mind, under Pagan influences, ever achieved, so it was followed by the most degrading imbecility into which man, in civilized countries, was ever allowed to fall. Philosophy, like art, like literature, like science, arose, shone, grew dim, and passed away, leaving the world in night. Why was so bright

a glory followed by so dismal a shame? What a comment is this on the greatness and littleness of man!

In all probability the development of Greek philosophy originated with the Ionian Sophoi, though many suppose it was derived from the East. It is questionable whether the Oriental nations had any philosophy distinct from religion. The Germans are fond of tracing resemblances in the early speculations of the Greeks to the systems which prevailed in Asia from a very remote antiquity. Gladish sees in the Pythagorean system an adoption of Chinese doctrines; in the Heraclitic system, the influence of Persia; in the Empedoclean, Egyptian speculations; and in the Anaxagorean, the Jewish creeds. But the Orientals had theogonies, not philosophies. The Indian speculations aim at an exposition of ancient revelation. They profess to liberate the soul from the evils of mortal life, — to arrive at eternal beatitudes. But the state of perfectibility could be reached only by religious ceremonial observances and devout contemplation. The Indian systems do not disdain logical discussions, or a search after the principles of which the universe is composed; and hence we find great refinements in sophistry, and a wonderful subtilty of logical discussion, though these are directed to unattainable ends, — to the connection of good with evil, and the union of the Supreme with Nature. Nothing seemed to come out of these specula-

tions but an occasional elevation of mind among the learned, and a profound conviction of the misery of man and the obstacles to his perfection. The Greeks, starting from physical phenomena, went on in successive series of inquiries, elevating themselves above matter, above experience, even to the loftiest abstractions, until they classified the laws of thought. It is curious how speculation led to demonstration, and how inquiries into the world of matter prepared the way for the solution of intellectual phenomena. Philosophy kept pace with geometry, and those who observed Nature also gloried in abstruse calculations. Philosophy and mathematics seem to have been allied with the worship of art among the same men, and it is difficult to say which more distinguished them, — æsthetic culture or power of abstruse reasoning.

We do not read of any remarkable philosophical inquirer until Thales arose, the first of the Ionian school. He was born at Miletus, a Greek colony in Asia Minor, about the year 636 B.C., when Ancus Martius was king of Rome, and Josiah reigned at Jerusalem. He has left no writings behind him, but was numbered as one of the seven wise men of Greece on account of his political sagacity and wisdom in public affairs. I do not here speak of his astronomical and geometrical labors, which were great, and which have left their mark even upon our own daily life, — as,

for instance, in the fact that he was the first to have divided the year into three hundred and sixty-five days.

> "And he, 'tis said, did first compute the stars
> Which beam in Charles's wain, and guide the bark
> Of the Phœnecian sailor o'er the sea."

He is celebrated also for practical wisdom. "Know thyself," is one of his remarkable sayings. The chief claim of Thales to a lofty rank among sages, however, is that he was the first who attempted a logical solution of material phenomena, without resorting to mythical representations. Thales felt that there was a grand question to be answered relative to the *beginning of things*. "Philosophy," it has been well said, "may be a history of *errors*, but not of *follies*." It was not a folly, in a rude age, to speculate on the first or fundamental principle of things. Thales looked around him upon Nature, upon the sea and earth and sky, and concluded that water or moisture was the vital principle. He felt it in the air, he saw it in the clouds above and in the ground beneath his feet. He saw that plants were sustained by rain and by the dew, that neither animal nor man could live without water, and that to fishes it was the native element. What more important or vital than water? It was the *prima materia*, the ἀρχή, the beginning of all things, —the origin of the world. How so crude a specula-

tion could have been maintained by so wise a man it is difficult to conjecture. It is not, however, the cause which he assigns for the beginning of things which is noteworthy, so much as the fact that his mind was directed to any solution of questions pertaining to the origin of the universe. It was these questions, and the solution of them, which marked the Ionian philosophers, and which showed the inquiring nature of their minds. What is the great first cause of all things? Thales saw it in one of the four elements of Nature as the ancients divided them; and this is the earliest recorded theory among the Greeks of the origin of the world. It is an induction from one of the phenomena of animated Nature,—the nutrition and production of a seed. He regarded the entire world in the light of a living being gradually maturing and forming itself from an imperfect seed-state, which was of a moist nature. This moisture endues the universe with vitality. The world, he thought, was full of gods, but they had their origin in water. He had no conception of God as *intelligence*, or as a *creative* power. He had a great and inquiring mind, but it gave him no knowledge of a spiritual, controlling, and personal deity.

Anaximenes, the disciple of Thales, pursued his master's inquiries and adopted his method. He also was born in Miletus, but at what time is unknown, —

probably 500 B. C. Like Thales, he held to the eternity of matter. Like him, he disbelieved in the existence of anything immaterial, for even a human soul is formed out of matter. He, too, speculated on the origin of the universe, but thought that *air*, not water, was the primal cause. This element seems to be universal. We breathe it; all things are sustained by it. It is Life, — that is, pregnant with vital energy, and capable of infinite transmutations. All things are produced by it; all is again resolved into it; it supports all things; it surrounds the world; it has infinitude; it has eternal motion. Thus did this philosopher reason, comparing the world with our own living existence, — which he took to be air, — an imperishable principle of life. He thus advanced a step beyond Thales, since he regarded the world not after the analogy of an imperfect seed-state, but after that of the highest condition of life, — the human soul. And he attempted to refer to one general law all the transformations of the first simple substance into its successive states, in that the cause of change is the eternal motion of the air.

Diogenes of Apollonia, in Crete, one of the disciples of Anaximenes, born 500 B. C., also believed that air was the principle of the universe, but he imputed to it an intellectual energy, yet without recognizing any

distinction between mind and matter. He made air and the soul identical. "For," says he, "man and all other animals breathe and live by means of the air, and therein consists their soul." And as it is the primary being from which all is derived, it is necessarily an eternal and imperishable body; but as *soul* it is also endued with consciousness. Diogenes thus refers the origin of the world to an intelligent being, — to a soul which knows and vivifies. Anaximenes regarded air as having life; Diogenes saw in it also intelligence. Thus philosophy advanced step by step, though still groping in the dark; for the origin of all things, according to Diogenes, must exist in *intelligence*. According to Diogenes Laertius, he said: "It appears to me that he who begins any treatise ought to lay down principles about which there can be no dispute."

Heraclitus of Ephesus, classed by Ritter among the Ionian philosophers, was born 503 B. C. Like others of his school, he sought a physical ground for all phenomena. The elemental principle he regarded as *fire*, since all things are convertible into it. In one of its modifications this fire, or fluid, self-kindled, permeating everything as the soul or principle of life, is endowed with intelligence and powers of ceaseless activity. "If Anaximenes," says Maurice, not very clearly, "discovered that he had within him a power and principle

which ruled over all the acts and functions of his bodily frame, Heraclitus found that there was life within him which he could not call his own, and yet it was, in the very highest sense, *himself*, so that without it he would have been a poor, helpless, isolated creature, — a universal life which connected him with his fellow-men, with the absolute source and original fountain of life. . . . He proclaimed the absolute vitality of Nature, the endless change of matter, the mutability and perishability of all individual things in contrast with the eternal Being, — the supreme harmony which rules over all." To trace the divine energy of life in all things was the general problem of the philosophy of Heraclitus, and this spirit was akin to the pantheism of the East. But he was one of the greatest speculative intellects that preceded Plato, and of all the physical theorists arrived nearest to spiritual truth. He taught the germs of what was afterward more completely developed. "From his theory of perpetual fluxion," says Archer Butler, "Plato derived the necessity of seeking a stable basis for the universal system in his world of ideas." Heraclitus was, however, an obscure writer, and moreover cynical and arrogant.

Anaxagoras, the most famous of the Ionian philosophers, was born 500 B. C., and belonged to a rich and noble family. Regarding philosophy as the noblest

pursuit of earth, he abandoned his inheritance for the study of Nature. He went to Athens in the most brilliant period of her history, and had Pericles, Euripides, and Socrates for pupils. He taught that the great moving force of Nature was intellect (*νοῦς*). Intelligence was the cause of the world and of order, and mind was the principle of motion; yet this intelligence was not a moral intelligence, but simply the *primum mobile*, — the all-knowing motive force by which the order of Nature is effected. He thus laid the foundation of a new system, under which the Attic philosophers sought to explain Nature, by regarding as the cause of all things, not *matter* in its different elements, but rather *mind*, thought, intelligence, which both knows and acts,—a grand conception, unrivalled in ancient speculation. This explanation of material phenomena by intellectual causes was the peculiar merit of Anaxagoras, and places him in a very high rank among the thinkers of the world. Moreover, he recognized the reason as the only faculty by which we become cognizant of truth, the senses being too weak to discover the real component particles of things. Like all the great inquirers, he was impressed with the limited degree of positive knowledge compared with what there is to be learned. "Nothing," says he, "can be known; nothing is certain; sense is limited, intellect is weak, life is short," — the complaint, not of

a sceptic, but of a man overwhelmed with the sense of his incapacity to solve the problems which arose before his active mind. Anaxagoras thought that this spirit (νοῦς) gave to all those material atoms which in the beginning of the world lay in disorder the impulse by which they took the forms of individual things, and that this impulse was given in a circular direction. Hence that the sun, moon, and stars, and even the air, are constantly moving in a circle.

In the mean time another sect of philosophers had arisen, who, like the Ionians, sought to explain Nature, but by a different method. Anaximander, born 610 B. C., was one of the original mathematicians of Greece, yet, like Pythagoras and Thales, speculated on the beginning of things. His principle was that *The Infinite* is the origin of all things. He used the word ἀρχή (*beginning*) to denote the material out of which all things were formed, as the Everlasting, the Divine. The idea of elevating an abstraction into a great first cause was certainly a long stride in philosophic generalization to be taken at that age of the world, following as it did so immediately upon such partial and childish ideas as that any single one of the familiar "elements" could be the primal cause of all things. It seems almost like the speculations of our own time, when philosophers seek to find the first cause in impersonal Force, or infinite Energy. Yet it is not really easy to

From the painting by G. H. Boughton

PURITANS GOING TO CHURCH

understand Anaximander's meaning, other than that the abstract has a higher significance than the concrete. The speculations of Thales had tended toward discovering the material constitution of the universe upon an *induction* from observed facts, and thus made water to be the origin of all things. Anaximander, accustomed to view things in the abstract, could not accept so concrete a thing as water; his speculations tended toward mathematics, to the science of pure *deduction*. The primary Being is a unity, one in all, comprising within itself the multiplicity of elements from which all mundane things are composed. It is only in infinity that the perpetual changes of things can take place. Thus Anaximander, an original but vague thinker, prepared the way for Pythagoras.

This later philosopher and mathematician, born about the year 600 B. C., stands as one of the great names of antiquity; but his life is shrouded in dim magnificence. The old historians paint him as "clothed in robes of white, his head covered with gold, his aspect grave and majestic, rapt in the contemplation of the mysteries of existence, listening to the music of Homer and Hesiod, or to the harmony of the spheres."

Pythagoras was supposed to be a native of Samos. When quite young, being devoted to learning, he quitted his country and went to Egypt, where he

learned its language and all the secret mysteries of the priests. He then returned to Samos, but finding the island under the dominion of a tyrant he fled to Crotona, in Italy, where he gained great reputation for wisdom, and made laws for the Italians. His pupils were about three hundred in number. He wrote three books, which were extant in the time of Diogenes Laertius, — one on Education, one on Politics, and one on Natural Philosophy. He also wrote an epic poem on the universe, to which he gave the name of *Kosmos.*

Among the ethical principles which Pythagoras taught was that men ought not to pray for anything in particular, since they do not know what is good for them; that drunkenness was identical with ruin; that no one should exceed the proper quantity of meat and drink; that the property of friends is common; that men should never say or do anything in anger. He forbade his disciples to offer victims to the gods, ordering them to worship only at those altars which were unstained with blood.

Pythagoras was the first person who introduced measures and weights among the Greeks. But it is his philosophy which chiefly claims our attention. His main principle was that *number* is the essence of things, — probably meaning by number order and harmony and conformity to law. The order of the universe, he taught, is only a harmonical development

of the first principle of all things to virtue and wisdom. He attached much value to music, as an art which has great influence on the affections; hence his doctrine of the music of the spheres. Assuming that number is the essence of the world, he deduced the idea that the world is regulated by numerical proportions, or by a system of laws which are regular and harmonious in their operations. Hence the necessity for an intelligent creator of the universe. The Infinite of Anaximander became the One of Pythagoras. He believed that the soul is incorporeal, and is put into the body subject to numerical and harmonical relation, and thus to divine regulation. Hence the tendency of his speculations was to raise the soul to the contemplation of law and order, — of a supreme Intelligence reigning in justice and truth. Justice and truth became thus paramount virtues, to be practised and sought as the end of life. "It is impossible not to see in these lofty speculations the effect of the Greek mind, according to its own genius, seeking after God, if haply it might find Him."

We now approach the second stage of Greek philosophy. The Ionic philosophers had sought to find the first principle of all things in the elements, and the Pythagoreans in number, or harmony and law, implying an intelligent creator. The Eleatics, who now arose, went beyond the realm of physics to pure metaphysical

inquiries, to an idealistic pantheism, which disregarded the sensible, maintaining that the source of truth is independent of the senses. Here they were forestalled by the Hindu sages.

The founder of this school was Xenophanes, born in Colophon, an Ionian city of Asia Minor, from which being expelled he wandered over Sicily as a rhapsodist, or minstrel, reciting his elegiac poetry on the loftiest truths, and at last, about the year 536 B. C., came to Elea, where he settled. The principal subject of his inquiries was deity itself, — the great First Cause, the supreme Intelligence of the universe. From the principle *ex nihilo nihil fit* he concluded that nothing could pass from non-existence to existence. All things that exist are created by supreme Intelligence, who is eternal and immutable. From this truth that God must be from all eternity, he advances to deny all multiplicity. A plurality of gods is impossible. With these sublime views, — the unity and eternity and omnipotence of God, — Xenophanes boldly attacked the popular errors of his day. He denounced the transference to the deity of the human form; he inveighed against Homer and Hesiod; he ridiculed the doctrine of migration of souls. Thus he sings, —

"Such things of the gods are related by Homer and Hesiod
As would be shame and abiding disgrace to mankind, —
Promises broken, and thefts, and the one deceiving the other."

And again, respecting anthropomorphic representations of the deity, —

"But men foolishly think that gods are born like as men are,
And have too a dress like their own, and their voice and their figure;
But there's but one God alone, the greatest of gods and of mortals,
Neither in body to mankind resembling, neither in ideas."

Such were the sublime meditations of Xenophanes. He believed in the *One*, which is God; but this all-pervading, unmoved, undivided being was not a personal God, nor a moral governor, but deity pervading all space. He could not separate God from the world, nor could he admit the existence of world which is not God. He was a monotheist, but his monotheism was pantheism. He saw God in all the manifestations of Nature. This did not satisfy him nor resolve his doubts, and he therefore confessed that reason could not compass the exalted aims of philosophy. But there was no cynicism in his doubt. It was the soul-sickening consciousness that reason was incapable of solving the mighty questions that he burned to know. There was no way to arrive at the truth, "for," said he, "error is spread over all things." It was not disdain of knowledge, it was the combat of contradictory opinions that oppressed him. He could not solve the questions pertaining to God. What un-

instructed reason can? "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou know the Almighty unto perfection?" What was impossible to Job was not possible to Xenophanes. But he had attained a recognition of the unity and perfections of God; and this conviction he would spread abroad, and tear down the superstitions which hid the face of truth. I have great admiration for this philosopher, so sad, so earnest, so enthusiastic, wandering from city to city, indifferent to money, comfort, friends, fame, that he might kindle the knowledge of God. This was a lofty aim indeed for philosophy in that age. It was a higher mission than that of Homer, great as his was, though not so successful.

Parmenides of Elea, born about the year 530 B. C., followed out the system of Xenophanes, the central idea of which was the existence of God. With Parmenides the main thought was the notion of *being.* Being is uncreated and unchangeable; the fulness of all being is *thought;* the *All* is thought and intelligence. He maintained the uncertainty of knowledge, meaning the knowledge derived through the senses. He did not deny the certainty of reason. He was the first who drew a distinction between knowledge obtained by the senses and that obtained through the reason; and thus he anticipated the doctrine of innate ideas. From the uncertainty of knowledge derived

through the senses, he deduced the twofold system of true and apparent knowledge.

Zeno of Elea, the friend and pupil of Parmenides, born 500 B. C., brought nothing new to the system, but invented *Dialectics*, the art of disputation, — that department of logic which afterward became so powerful in the hands of Plato and Aristotle, and so generally admired among the schoolmen. It seeks to establish truth by refuting error through the *reductio ad absurdum*. While Parmenides sought to establish the doctrine of the *One*, Zeno proved the non-existence of the *Many*. He did not deny existences, but denied that appearances were real existences. It was the mission of Zeno to establish the doctrines of his master. But in order to convince his listeners, he was obliged to use a new method of argument. So he carried on his argumentation by question and answer, and was therefore the first who used dialogue, which he called dialectics, as a medium of philosophical communication.

Empedocles, born 444 B. C., like others of the Eleatics, complained of the imperfection of the senses, and looked for truth only in reason. He regarded truth as a perfect unity, ruled by love, — the only true force, the one moving cause of all things, — the first creative power by which or whom the world was formed. Thus "God is love" is a sublime doctrine

which philosophy revealed to the Greeks, and the emphatic and continuous and assured declaration of which was the central theme of the revelation made by Jesus, the Christ, who resolved all the Law and the Gospel into the element of Love, — fatherly on the part of God, filial and fraternal on the part of men.

Thus did the Eleatic philosophers speculate almost contemporaneously with the Ionians on the beginning of things and the origin of knowledge, taking different grounds, and attempting to correct the representations of sense by the notions of reason. But both schools, although they did not establish many truths, raised an inquisitive spirit, and awakened freedom of thought and inquiry. They raised up workmen for more enlightened times, even as scholastic inquirers in the Middle Ages prepared the way for the revival of philosophy on sounder principles. They were all men of remarkable elevation of character as well as genius. They hated superstitions, and attacked the anthropomorphism of their day. They handled gods and goddesses with allegorizing boldness, and hence were often persecuted by the people. They did not establish moral truths by scientific processes, but they set examples of lofty disdain of wealth and factitious advantages, and devoted themselves with holy enthusiasm to the solution of the great questions which

pertain to God and Nature. Thales won the respect of his countrymen by devotion to studies. Pythagoras spent twenty-two years in Egypt to learn its science. Xenophanes wandered over Sicily as a rhapsodist of truth. Parmenides, born to wealth and splendor, forsook the feverish pursuit of sensual enjoyments that he might "behold the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies." Zeno declined all worldly honors in order that he might diffuse the doctrines of his master. Heraclitus refused the chief magistracy of Ephesus that he might have leisure to explore the depths of his own nature. Anaxagoras allowed his patrimony to run to waste in order to solve problems. "To philosophy," said he, "I owe my worldly ruin, and my soul's prosperity." All these men were, without exception, the greatest and best men of their times. They laid the foundation of the beautiful temple which was constructed after they were dead, in which both physics and psychology reached the dignity of science. They too were prophets, although unconscious of their divine mission, — prophets of that day when the science which explores and illustrates the works of God shall enlarge, enrich, and beautify man's conceptions of the great creative Father.

Nevertheless, these great men, lofty as were their inquiries and blameless their lives, had not established any system, nor any theories which were in-

controvertible. They had simply speculated, and the world ridiculed their speculations. Their ideas were one-sided, and when pushed out to their extreme logical sequence were antagonistic to one another; which had a tendency to produce doubt and scepticism. Men denied the existence of the gods, and the grounds of certainty fell away from the human mind.

This spirit of scepticism was favored by the tide of worldliness and prosperity which followed the Persian War. Athens became a great centre of art, of taste, of elegance, and of wealth. Politics absorbed the minds of the people. Glory and splendor were followed by corruption of morals and the pursuit of material pleasures. Philosophy went out of fashion, since it brought no outward and tangible good. More scientific studies were pursued, — those which could be applied to purposes of utility and material gains; even as in our day geology, chemistry, mechanics, engineering, having reference to the practical wants of men, command talent, and lead to certain reward. In Athens, rhetoric, mathematics, and natural history supplanted rhapsodies and speculations on God and Providence. Renown and wealth could be secured only by readiness and felicity of speech, and that was most valued which brought immediate recompense, like eloquence. Men began to practise eloquence as an art, and to employ it in furthering their interests.

They made special pleadings, since it was their object to gain their point at any expense of law and justice. Hence they taught that nothing was immutably right, but only so by convention. They undermined all confidence in truth and religion by teaching its uncertainty. They denied to men even the capability of arriving at truth. They practically affirmed the cold and cynical doctrine that there is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink. *Cui bono?* this, the cry of most men in periods of great outward prosperity, was the popular inquiry. Who will show us any good? — how can we become rich, strong, honorable? — this was the spirit of that class of public teachers who arose in Athens when art and eloquence and wealth and splendor were at their height in the fifth century before Christ, and when the elegant Pericles was the leader of fashion and of political power.

These men were the Sophists, — rhetorical men, who taught the children of the rich; worldly men, who sought honor and power; frivolous men, trifling with philosophical ideas; sceptical men, denying all certainty in truth; men who as teachers added nothing to the realm of science, but who yet established certain dialectical rules useful to later philosophers. They were a wealthy, powerful, honored class, not much esteemed by men of thought, but sought out as very successful teachers of rhetoric, and also gen-

erally selected as ambassadors on difficult missions. They were full of logical tricks, and contrived to throw ridicule upon profound inquiries. They taught also mathematics, astronomy, philology, and natural history with success. They were polished men of society; not profound nor religious, but very brilliant as talkers, and very ready in wit and sophistry. And some of them were men of great learning and talent, like Democritus, Leucippus, and Gorgias. They were not pretenders and quacks; they were sceptics who denied subjective truths, and labored for outward advantage. They taught the art of disputation, and sought systematic methods of proof. They thus prepared the way for a more perfect philosophy than that taught by the Ionians, the Pythagoreans, or the Eleatics, since they showed the vagueness of such inquiries, conjectural rather than scientific. They had no doctrines in common. They were the barristers of their age, *paid* to make the "worse appear the better reason;" yet not teachers of immorality any more than the lawyers of our day, — men of talents, the intellectual leaders of society. If they did not advance positive truths, they were useful in the method they created. They had no hostility to truth, as such; they only doubted whether it could be reached in the realm of psychological inquiries, and sought to apply knowledge to their own purposes, or rather to distort it in

order to gain a case. They are not a class of men whom I admire, as I do the old sages they ridiculed, but they were not without their use in the development of philosophy. The Sophists also rendered a service to literature by giving definiteness to language, and creating style in prose writing. Protagoras investigated the principles of accurate composition; Prodicus busied himself with inquiries into the significance of words; Gorgias, like Voltaire, gloried in a captivating style, and gave symmetry to the structure of sentences.

The ridicule and scepticism of the Sophists brought out the great powers of Socrates, to whom philosophy is probably more indebted than to any man who ever lived, not so much for a perfect system as for the impulse he gave to philosophical inquiries, and for his successful exposure of error. He inaugurated a new era. Born in Athens in the year 470 B.C., the son of a poor sculptor, he devoted his life to the search after truth for its own sake, and sought to base it on immutable foundations. He was the mortal enemy of the Sophists, whom he encountered, as Pascal did the Jesuits, with wit, irony, puzzling questions, and remorseless logic. It is true that Socrates and his great successors Plato and Aristotle were called "Sophists," but only as all philosophers or wise men were so called. The Sophists as a class had incurred the odium of being the first teachers who received pay for

the instruction they imparted. The philosophers generally taught for the love of truth. The Sophists were a natural and necessary and very useful development of their time, but they were distinctly on a lower level than the Philosophers, or *lovers* of wisdom.

Like the earlier philosophers, Socrates disdained wealth, ease, and comfort, — but with greater devotion than they, since he lived in a more corrupt age, when poverty was a disgrace and misfortune a crime, when success was the standard of merit, and every man was supposed to be the arbiter of his own fortune, ignoring that Providence who so often refuses the race to the swift, and the battle to the strong. He was what in our time would be called eccentric. He walked barefooted, meanly clad, and withal not over cleanly, seeking public places, disputing with everybody willing to talk with him, making everybody ridiculous, especially if one assumed airs of wisdom or knowledge, — an exasperating opponent, since he wove a web around a man from which he could not be extricated, and then exposed him to ridicule in the wittiest city of the world. He attacked everybody, and yet was generally respected, since it was *errors* rather than persons, *opinions* rather than vices, that he attacked; and this he did with bewitching eloquence and irresistible fascination, so that though he was poor and barefooted, a Silenus in appearance, with thick lips,

upturned nose, projecting eyes, unwieldy belly, he was sought by Alcibiades and admired by Aspasia. Even Xanthippe, a beautiful young woman, very much younger than he, a woman fond of the comforts and pleasures of life, was willing to marry him, although it is said that she turned out a "scolding wife" after the *res angusta domi* had disenchanted her from the music of his voice and the divinity of his nature. "I have heard Pericles," said the most dissipated and voluptuous man in Athens, "and other excellent orators, but was not moved by them; while this Marsyas — this Satyr — so affects me that the life I lead is hardly worth living, and I stop my ears as from the Sirens, and flee as fast as possible, that I may not sit down and grow old in listening to his talk."

Socrates learned his philosophy from no one, and struck out an entirely new path. He declared his own ignorance, and sought to convince other people of theirs. He did not seek to reveal truth so much as to expose error. And yet it was his object to attain correct ideas as to moral obligations. He proclaimed the sovereignty of virtue and the immutability of justice. He sought to delineate and enforce the practical duties of life. His great object was the elucidation of morals; and he was the first to teach ethics systematically from the immutable principles of moral obligation. Moral certitude was the lofty platform

from which he surveyed the world, and upon which, as a rock, he rested in the storms of life. Thus he was a reformer and a moralist. It was his ethical doctrines which were most antagonistic to the age and the least appreciated. He was a profoundly religious man, recognized Providence, and believed in the immortality of the soul. He did not presume to inquire into the Divine essence, yet he believed that the gods were omniscient and omnipresent, that they ruled by the law of goodness, and that in spite of their multiplicity there was unity, — a supreme Intelligence that governed the world. Hence he was hated by the Sophists, who denied the certainty of arriving at any knowledge of God. From the comparative worthlessness of the body he deduced the immortality of the soul. With him the end of life was reason and intelligence. He deduced the existence of God from the order and harmony of Nature, belief in which was irresistible. He endeavored to connect the moral with the religious consciousness, and thus to promote the practical welfare of society. In this light Socrates stands out the grandest personage of Pagan antiquity, — as a moralist, as a teacher of ethics, as a man who recognized the Divine.

So far as he was concerned in the development of Greek philosophy proper, he was inferior to some of his disciples. Yet he gave a turning-point to a new

period when he awakened the *idea* of knowledge, and was the founder of the method of scientific inquiry, since he pointed out the legitimate bounds of inquiry, and was thus the precursor of Bacon and Pascal. He did not attempt to make physics explain metaphysics, nor metaphysics the phenomena of the natural world; and he reasoned only from what was generally assumed to be true and invariable. He was a great pioneer of philosophy, since he resorted to inductive methods of proof, and gave general definiteness to ideas. Although he employed induction, it was his aim to withdraw the mind from the contemplation of Nature, and to fix it on its own phenomena, — to look inward rather than outward; a method carried out admirably by his pupil Plato. The previous philosophers had given their attention to external nature; Socrates gave up speculations about material phenomena, and directed his inquiries solely to the nature of knowledge. And as he considered knowledge to be identical with virtue, he speculated on ethical questions mainly, and the method which he taught was that by which alone man could become better and wiser. To know one's self, — in other words, that "the proper study of mankind is man," — he proclaimed with Thales. Cicero said of him, "Socrates brought down philosophy from the heavens to the earth." He did not disdain the subjects which chiefly interested the Sophists, — astron-

omy, rhetoric, physics, — but he chiefly discussed moral questions, such as, What is piety? What is the just and the unjust? What is temperance? What is courage? What is the character fit for a citizen? — and other ethical points, involving practical human relationships.

These questions were discussed by Socrates in a striking manner, and by a method peculiarly his own. "Professing ignorance, he put perhaps this question: What is law? It was familiar, and was answered off-hand. Socrates, having got the answer, then put fresh questions applicable to specific cases, to which the respondent was compelled to give an answer inconsistent with the first, thus showing that the definition was too narrow or too wide, or defective in some essential condition. The respondent then amended his answer; but this was a prelude to other questions, which could only be answered in ways inconsistent with the amendment; and the respondent, after many attempts to disentangle himself, was obliged to plead guilty to his inconsistencies, with an admission that he could make no satisfactory answer to the original inquiry which had at first appeared so easy." Thus, by this system of cross-examination, he showed the intimate connection between the dialectic method and the logical distribution of particulars into species and genera. The discussion first turns upon the meaning of some generic

term; the queries bring the answers into collision with various particulars which it ought not to comprehend, or which it ought to comprehend, but does not. Socrates broke up the one into many by his analytical string of questions, which was a mode of argument by which he separated *real* knowledge from the *conceit* of knowledge, and led to precision in the use of definitions. It was thus that he exposed the false, without aiming even to teach the true; for he generally professed ignorance on his part, and put himself in the attitude of a learner, while by his cross-examinations he made the man from whom he apparently sought knowledge to appear as ignorant as himself, or, still worse, absolutely ridiculous.

Thus Socrates pulled away all the foundations on which a false science had been erected, and indicated the mode by which alone the true could be established. Here he was not unlike Bacon, who pointed out the way whereby science could be advanced, without founding any school or advocating any system; but the Athenian was unlike Bacon in the object of his inquiries. Bacon was disgusted with ineffective *logical* speculations, and Socrates with ineffective *physical* researches. He never suffered a general term to remain undetermined, but applied it at once to particulars, and by questions the purport of which was not comprehended. It was not by positive teaching,

but by exciting scientific impulse in the minds of others, or stirring up the analytical faculties, that Socrates manifested originality. It was his aim to force the seekers after truth into the path of inductive generalization, whereby alone trustworthy conclusions could be formed. He thus struck out from his own and other minds that fire which sets light to original thought and stimulates analytical inquiry. He was a religious and intellectual missionary, preparing the way for the Platos and Aristotles of the succeeding age by his severe dialectics. This was his mission, and he declared it by talking. He did not lecture; he conversed. For more than thirty years he discoursed on the principles of morality, until he arrayed against himself enemies who caused him to be put to death, for his teachings had undermined the popular system which the Sophists accepted and practised. He probably might have been acquitted if he had chosen to be, but he did not wish to live after his powers of usefulness had passed away.

The services which Socrates rendered to philosophy, as enumerated by Tennemann, "are twofold, — negative and positive. *Negative,* inasmuch as he avoided all vain discussions; combated mere speculative reasoning on substantial grounds; and had the wisdom to acknowledge ignorance when necessary, but without attempting to determine accurately what is capable

After the painting by O. Knille

THE SCHOOL OF PLATO

and what is not of being accurately known. *Positive*, inasmuch as he examined with great ability the ground directly submitted to our understanding, and of which man is the centre."

Socrates cannot be said to have founded a school, like Xenophanes. He did not bequeath a system of doctrines. He had however his disciples, who followed in the path which he suggested. Among these were Aristippus, Antisthenes, Euclid of Megara, Phædo of Elis, and Plato, all of whom were pupils of Socrates and founders of schools. Some only partially adopted his method, and each differed from the other. Nor can it be said that all of them advanced science. Aristippus, the founder of the Cyreniac school, was a sort of philosophic voluptuary, teaching that pleasure is the end of life. Antisthenes, the founder of the Cynics, was both virtuous and arrogant, placing the supreme good in virtue, but despising speculative science, and maintaining that no man can refute the opinions of another. He made it a virtue to be ragged, hungry, and cold, like the ancient monks; an austere, stern, bitter, reproachful man, who affected to despise all pleasures, — like his own disciple Diogenes, who lived in a tub, and carried on a war between the mind and body, brutal, scornful, proud. To men who maintained that science was impossible, philosophy is not much indebted, although they were disciples of Soc-

rates. Euclid — not the mathematician, who was about a century later — merely gave a new edition of the Eleatic doctrines, and Phædo speculated on the oneness of "the good."

It was not till Plato arose that a more complete system of philosophy was founded. He was born of noble Athenian parents, 429 B. C., the year that Pericles died, and the second year of the Peloponnesian War, — the most active period of Grecian thought. He had a severe education, studying mathematics, poetry, music, rhetoric, and blending these with philosophy. He was only twenty when he found out Socrates, with whom he remained ten years, and from whom he was separated only by death. He then went on his travels, visiting everything worth seeing in his day, especially in Egypt. When he returned he began to teach the doctrines of his master, which he did, like him, gratuitously, in a garden near Athens, planted with lofty plane-trees and adorned with temples and statues. This was called the Academy, and gave a name to his system of philosophy. It is this only with which we have to do. It is not the calm, serious, meditative, isolated man that I would present, but *his contribution* to the developments of philosophy on the principles of his master. Surely no man ever made a richer contribution to this department of human inquiry than Plato. He may not have had the

originality or keenness of Socrates, but he was more profound. He was pre-eminently a great thinker, a great logician, skilled in dialectics; and his "Dialogues" are such perfect exercises of dialectical method that the ancients were divided as to whether he was a sceptic or a dogmatist. He adopted the Socratic method and enlarged it. Says Lewes: —

"Analysis, as insisted on by Plato, is the decomposition of the whole into its separate parts, — is seeing the one in many. . . . The individual thing was transitory; the abstract idea was eternal. Only concerning the latter could philosophy occupy itself. Socrates, insisting on proper definitions, had no conception of the classification of those definitions which must constitute philosophy. Plato, by the introduction of this process, shifted philosophy from the ground of inquiries into man and society, which exclusively occupied Socrates, to that of dialectics."

Plato was also distinguished for skill in composition. Dionysius of Halicarnassus classes him with Herodotus and Demosthenes in the perfection of his style, which is characterized by great harmony and rhythm, as well as by a rich variety of elegant metaphors.

Plato made philosophy to consist in the discussion of general terms, or abstract ideas. General terms were synonymous with real existences, and these were the only objects of philosophy. These were called *Ideas*;

and ideas are the basis of his system, or rather the subject-matter of dialectics. He maintained that every general term, or abstract idea, has a real and independent existence; nay, that the mental power of conceiving and combining ideas, as contrasted with the mere impressions received from matter and external phenomena, is the only real and permanent existence. Hence his writings became the great fountain-head of the Ideal philosophy. In his assertion of the real existence of so abstract and supersensuous a thing as an idea, he probably was indebted to Pythagoras, for Plato was a master of the whole realm of philosophical speculation; but his conception of *ideas* as the essence of being is a great advance on that philosopher's conception of *numbers*. He was taught by Socrates that beyond this world of sense there is the world of eternal truth, and that there are certain principles concerning which there can be no dispute. The soul apprehends the idea of goodness, greatness, etc. It is in the celestial world that we are to find the realm of ideas. Now, God is the supreme idea. To know God, then, should be the great aim of life. We know him through the desire which like feels for like. The divinity within feels its affinity with the divinity revealed in beauty, or any other abstract idea. The longing of the soul for beauty is *love*. Love, then, is the bond which unites the human with the divine.

Beauty is not revealed by harmonious outlines that appeal to the senses, but is *truth;* it is divinity. Beauty, truth, love, these are God, whom it is the supreme desire of the soul to comprehend, and by the contemplation of whom the mortal soul sustains itself. Knowledge of God is the great end of life; and this knowledge is effected by dialectics, for only out of dialectics can correct knowledge come. But man, immersed in the flux of sensualities, can never fully attain this knowledge of God, the object of all rational inquiry. Hence the imperfection of all human knowledge. The supreme good is attainable; it is not attained. God is the immutable good, and justice the rule of the universe. "The vital principle of Plato's philosophy," says Ritter, "is to show that true science is the knowledge of the good, is the eternal contemplation of truth, or ideas; and though man may not be able to apprehend it in its unity, because he is subject to the restraints of the body, he is nevertheless permitted to recognize it imperfectly by calling to mind the eternal measure of existence by which he is in his origin connected." To quote from Ritter again: —

"When we review the doctrines of Plato, it is impossible to deny that they are pervaded with a grand view of life and the universe. This is the noble thought which inspired him to say that God is the constant and immutable good;

the world is good in a state of becoming, and the human soul that in and through which the good in the world is to be consummated. In his sublimer conception he shows himself the worthy disciple of Socrates. . . . While he adopted many of the opinions of his predecessors, and gave due consideration to the results of the earlier philosophy, he did not allow himself to be disturbed by the mass of conflicting theories, but breathed into them the life-giving breath of unity. He may have erred in his attempts to determine the nature of good; still he pointed out to all who aspire to a knowledge of the divine nature an excellent road by which they may arrive at it."

That Plato was one of the greatest lights of the ancient world there can be no reasonable doubt. Nor is it probable that as a dialectician he has ever been surpassed, while his purity of life and his lofty inquiries and his belief in God and immortality make him, in an ethical point of view, the most worthy of the disciples of Socrates. He was to the Greeks what Kant was to the Germans; and these two great thinkers resemble each other in the structure of their minds and their relations to society.

The ablest part of the lectures of Archer Butler, of Dublin, is devoted to the Platonic philosophy. It is at once a criticism and a eulogium. No modern writer has written more enthusiastically of what he considers the crowning excellence of the Greek philosophy. The

dialectics of Plato, his ideal theory, his physics, his psychology, and his ethics are most ably discussed, and in the spirit of a loving and eloquent disciple. Butler represents the philosophy which he so much admires as a contemplation of, and a tendency to, the absolute and eternal good. As the admirers of Ralph Waldo Emerson claim that he, more than any other man of our times, entered into the spirit of the Platonic philosophy, I introduce some of his most striking paragraphs of subdued but earnest admiration of the greatest intellect of the ancient Pagan world, hoping that they may be clearer to others than they are to me: —

"These sentences [of Plato] contain the culture of nations; these are the corner-stone of schools; these are the fountain-head of literatures. A discipline it is in logic, arithmetic, taste, symmetry, poetry, language, rhetoric, ontology, morals, or practical wisdom. There never was such a range of speculation. Out of Plato come all things that are still written and debated among men of thought. Great havoc makes he among our originalities. We have reached the mountain from which all these drift-bowlders were detached. . . . Plato, in Egypt and in Eastern pilgrimages, imbibed the idea of one Deity, in which all things are absorbed. The unity of Asia and the detail of Europe, the infinitude of the Asiatic soul and the defining, result-loving, machine-making, surface-seeking, opera-going Europe

Plato came to join, and by contact to enhance the energy of each. The excellence of Europe and Asia is in his brain. Metaphysics and natural philosophy expressed the genius of Europe; he substricts the religion of Asia as the base. In short, a balanced soul was born, perceptive of the two elements. . . . The physical philosophers had sketched each his theory of the world; the theory of atoms, of fire, of flux, of spirit, — theories mechanical and chemical in their genius. Plato, a master of mathematics, studious of all natural laws and causes, feels these, as second causes, to be no theories of the world, but bare inventories and lists. To the study of Nature he therefore prefixes the dogma, — 'Let us declare the cause which led the Supreme Ordainer to produce and compose the universe. He was good; . . . he wished that all things should be as much as possible like himself.' . . .

"Plato . . . represents the privilege of the intellect, — the power, namely, of carrying up every fact to successive platforms, and so disclosing in every fact a germ of expansion. . . . These expansions, or extensions, consist in continuing the spiritual sight where the horizon falls on our natural vision, and by this second sight discovering the long lines of law which shoot in every direction. . . . His definition of ideas as what is simple, permanent, uniform, and self-existent, forever discriminating them from the notions of the understanding, marks an era in the world.

The great disciple of Plato was Aristotle, and he carried on the philosophical movement which Socrates

had started to the highest limit that it ever reached in the ancient world. He was born at Stagira, 384 B. C., and early evinced an insatiable thirst for knowledge. When Plato returned from Sicily Aristotle joined his disciples at Athens, and was his pupil for seventeen years. On the death of Plato, he went on his travels and became the tutor of Alexander the Great, and in 335 B. C. returned to Athens after an absence of twelve years, and set up a school in the Lyceum. He taught while walking up and down the shady paths which surrounded it, from which habit he obtained the name of the Peripatetic, which has clung to his name and philosophy. His school had a great celebrity, and from it proceeded illustrious philosophers, statesmen, historians, and orators. Aristotle taught for thirteen years, during which time he composed most of his greater works. He not only wrote on dialectics and logic, but also on physics in its various departments. His work on "The History of Animals" was deemed so important that his royal pupil Alexander presented him with eight hundred talents — an enormous sum — for the collection of materials. He also wrote on ethics and politics, history and rhetoric, — pouring out letters, poems, and speeches, three-fourths of which are lost. He was one of the most voluminous writers of antiquity, and probably is the most learned man whose writings have come

down to us. Nor has any one of the ancients exercised upon the thinking of succeeding ages so wide an influence. He was an oracle until the revival of learning. Hegel says: —

"Aristotle penetrated into the whole mass, into every department of the universe of things, and subjected to the comprehension its scattered wealth; and the greater number of the philosophical sciences owe to him their separation and commencement."

He is also the father of the history of philosophy, since he gives an historical review of the way in which the subject has been hitherto treated by the earlier philosophers. Says Adolph Stahr: —

"Plato made the external world the region of the incomplete and bad, of the contradictory and the false, and recognized absolute truth only in the eternal immutable ideas. Aristotle laid down the proposition that the idea, which cannot of itself fashion itself into reality, is powerless, and has only a potential existence; and that it becomes a living reality only by realizing itself in a creative manner by means of its own energy."

There can be no doubt as to Aristotle's marvellous power of systematizing. Collecting together all the results of ancient speculation, he so combined them into a co-ordinate system that for a thousand years he reigned supreme in the schools. From a literary point

of view, Plato was doubtless his superior; but Plato was a poet, making philosophy divine and musical, while Aristotle's investigations spread over a far wider range. He differed from Plato chiefly in relation to the doctrine of ideas, without however resolving the difficulty which divided them. As he made matter to be the eternal ground of phenomena, he reduced the notion of it to a precision it never before enjoyed, and established thereby a necessary element in human science. But being bound to matter, he did not soar, as Plato did, into the higher regions of speculation; nor did he entertain as lofty views of God or of immortality. Neither did he have as high an ideal of human life; his definition of the highest good was a perfect practical activity in a perfect life.

With Aristotle closed the great Socratic movement in the history of speculation. When Socrates appeared there was a general prevalence of scepticism, arising from the unsatisfactory speculations respecting Nature. He removed this scepticism by inventing a new method of investigation, and by withdrawing the mind from the contemplation of Nature to the study of man himself. He bade men to look inward. Plato accepted his method, but applied it more universally. Like Socrates, however, ethics were the great subject of his inquiries, to which physics were only subordinate.

The problem he sought to solve was the way to live like the Deity; he would contemplate truth as the great aim of life. With Aristotle, ethics formed only one branch of attention; his main inquiries were in reference to physics and metaphysics. He thus, by bringing these into the region of inquiry, paved the way for a new epoch of scepticism.

Both Plato and Aristotle taught that reason alone can form science; but, as we have said, Aristotle differed from his master respecting the theory of ideas. He did not deny to ideas a *subjective* existence, but he did deny that they have an objective existence. He maintained that individual things alone *exist;* and if individuals alone exist, they can be known only by *sensation.* Sensation thus becomes the basis of knowledge. Plato made *reason* the basis of knowledge, but Aristotle made *experience* that basis. Plato directed man to the contemplation of Ideas; Aristotle, to the observation of Nature. Instead of proceeding synthetically and dialectically like Plato, he pursues an analytic course. His method is hence inductive, — the derivation of certain principles from a sum of given facts and phenomena. It would seem that positive science began with Aristotle, since he maintained that experience furnishes the principles of every science; but while his conception was just, there was not at that time a sufficient amount

of experience from which to generalize with effect. It is only a most extensive and exhaustive examination of the accuracy of a proposition which will warrant secure reasoning upon it. Aristotle reasoned without sufficient certainty of the major premise of his syllogisms.

Aristotle was the father of logic, and Hegel and Kant think there has been no improvement upon it since his day. This became to him the real organon of science. "He supposed it was not merely the instrument of thought, but the instrument of investigation." Hence it was futile for purposes of discovery, although important to aid processes of thought. Induction and syllogism are the two great features of his system of logic. The one sets out from particulars already known to arrive at a conclusion; the other sets out from some general principle to arrive at particulars. The latter more particularly characterized his logic, which he presented in sixteen forms, the whole evincing much ingenuity and skill in construction, and presenting at the same time a useful dialectical exercise. This syllogistic process of reasoning would be incontrovertible, if the *general* were better known than the *particular;* but it is only by induction, which proceeds from the world of experience, that we reach the higher world of cognition. Thus Aristotle made speculation subordinate to logi-

cal distinctions, and his system, when carried out by the mediæval Schoolmen, led to a spirit of useless quibbling. Instead of interrogating Nature they interrogated their own minds, and no great discoveries were made. From want of proper knowledge of the conditions of scientific inquiry, the method of Aristotle became fruitless for him; but it was the key by which future investigators were enabled to classify and utilize their vastly greater collection of facts and materials.

Though Aristotle wrote in a methodical manner, his writings exhibit great parsimony of language. There is no fascination in his style. It is without ornament, and very condensed. His merit consisted in great logical precision and scrupulous exactness in the employment of terms.

Philosophy, as a great system of dialectics, as an analysis of the power and faculties of the mind, as a method to pursue inquiries, culminated in Aristotle. He completed the great fabric of which Thales laid the foundation. The subsequent schools of philosophy directed attention to ethical and practical questions, rather than to intellectual phenomena. The Sceptics, like Pyrrho, had only negative doctrines, and held in disdain those inquiries which sought to penetrate the mysteries of existence. They did not believe that absolute truth was attainable by man; and they at-

tacked the prevailing systems with great plausibility. They pointed out the uncertainty of things, and the folly of striving to comprehend them.

The Epicureans despised the investigations of philosophy, since in their view these did not contribute to happiness. The subject of their inquiries was happiness, not truth. What will promote this? was the subject of their speculation. Epicurus, born 342 B. C., contended that pleasure was happiness; that pleasure should be sought not for its own sake, but with a view to the happiness of life obtained by it. He taught that happiness was inseparable from virtue, and that its enjoyments should be limited. He was averse to costly pleasures, and regarded contentedness with a little to be a great good. He placed wealth not in great possessions, but in few wants. He sought to widen the domain of pleasure and narrow that of pain, and regarded a passionless state of life as the highest. Nor did he dread death, which was deliverance from misery, as the Buddhists think. Epicurus has been much misunderstood, and his doctrines were subsequently perverted, especially when the arts of life were brought into the service of luxury, and a gross materialism was the great feature of society. Epicurus had much of the spirit of a practical philosopher, although very little of the earnest cravings of a religious man. He himself led a virtuous life, because he thought it was

wiser and better and more productive of happiness to be virtuous, not because it was his duty. His writings were very voluminous, and in his tranquil garden he led a peaceful life of study and enjoyment. His followers, and they were numerous, were led into luxury and effeminacy, — as was to be expected from a sceptical and irreligious philosophy, the great principle of which was that whatever is pleasant should be the object of existence. Sir James Mackintosh says: —

"To Epicurus we owe the general concurrence of reflecting men in succeeding times in the important truth that men cannot be happy without a virtuous frame of mind and course of life, — a truth of inestimable value, not peculiar to the Epicureans, but placed by their exaggerations in a stronger light; a truth, it must be added, of less importance as a motive to right conduct than to the completeness of moral theory, which, however, it is very far from solely constituting. With that truth the Epicureans blended another position, — that because virtue promotes happiness, every act of virtue must be done in order to promote the happiness of the agent. Although, therefore, he has the merit of having more strongly inculcated the connection of virtue with happiness, yet his doctrine is justly charged with indisposing the mind to those exalted and generous sentiments without which no pure, elevated, bold, or tender virtues can exist."

The Stoics were a large and celebrated sect of philosophers; but they added nothing to the domain of thought, — they created no system, they invented no new method, they were led into no new psychological inquiries. Their inquiries were chiefly ethical; and since ethics are a great part of the system of Greek philosophy, the Stoics are well worthy of attention. Some of the greatest men of antiquity are numbered among them, — like Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius. The philosophy they taught was morality, and this was eminently practical and also elevated.

The founder of this sect, Zeno, was born, it is supposed, on the island of Cyprus, about the year 350 B. C. He was the son of wealthy parents, but was reduced to poverty by misfortune. He was so good a man, and so profoundly revered by the Athenians, that they intrusted to him the keys of their citadel. He lived in a degenerate age, when scepticism and sensuality were eating out the life and vigor of Grecian society, when Greek civilization was rapidly passing away, when ancient creeds had lost their majesty, and general levity and folly overspread the land. Deeply impressed with the prevailing laxity of morals and the absence of religion, he lifted up his voice more as a reformer than as an inquirer after truth, and taught for more than fifty years in a place called the *Stoa*, "the Porch," which had once been the resort of

the poets. Hence the name of his school. He was chiefly absorbed with ethical questions, although he studied profoundly the systems of the old philosophers. "The Sceptics had attacked both perception and reason. They had shown that perception is after all based upon appearance, and appearance is not a certainty; and they showed that reason is unable to distinguish between appearance and certainty, since it had nothing but phenomena to build upon, and since there is no criterion to apply to reason itself." Then they proclaimed philosophy a failure, and without foundation. But Zeno, taking a stand on common-sense, fought for morality, as did Buddha before him, and long after him Reid and Beattie, when they combated the scepticism of Hume.

Philosophy, according to Zeno and other Stoics, was intimately connected with the duties of practical life. The contemplation, meditation, and thought recommended by Plato and Aristotle seemed only a covert recommendation of selfish enjoyment. The wisdom which it should be the aim of life to attain is virtue; and virtue is to live harmoniously with Nature. To live harmoniously with Nature is to exclude all personal ends; hence pleasure is to be disregarded, and pain is to be despised. And as all moral action must be in harmony with Nature the law of destiny is supreme, and all things move according to immu-

table fate. With the predominant tendency to the universal which characterized their system, the Stoics taught that the sage ought to regard himself as a citizen of the world rather than of any particular city or state. They made four things to be indispensable to virtue, — a knowledge of *good* and *evil*, which is the province of the reason; *temperance*, a knowledge of the due regulation of the sensual passions; *fortitude*, a conviction that it is good to suffer what is necessary; and *justice*, or acquaintance with what ought to be to every individual. They made *perfection* necessary to virtue; hence the severity of their system. The perfect sage, according to them, is raised above all influence of external events; he submits to the law of destiny; he is exempt from desire and fear, joy or sorrow; he is not governed even by what he is exposed to necessarily, like sorrow and pain; he is free from the restraints of passion; he is like a god in his mental placidity. Nor must the sage live only for himself, but for others also; he is a member of the whole body of mankind. He ought to marry, and to take part in public affairs; but he is to attack error and vice with uncompromising sternness, and will never weakly give way to compassion or forgiveness. Yet with this ideal the Stoics were forced to admit that virtue, like true knowledge, although theoretically attainable is practically beyond the reach

of man. They were discontented with themselves and with all around them, and looked upon all institutions as corrupt. They had a profound contempt for their age, and for what modern society calls "success in life;" but it cannot be denied that they practised a lofty and stern virtue in their degenerate times. Their God was made subject to Fate; and he was a material god, synonymous with Nature. Thus their system was pantheistic. But they maintained the dignity of reason, and sought to attain to virtues which it is not in the power of man fully to reach.

Zeno lived to the extreme old age of ninety-eight, although his constitution was not strong. He retained his powers by great abstemiousness, living chiefly on figs, honey, and bread. He was a modest and retiring man, seldom mingling with a crowd, or admitting the society of more than two or three friends at a time. He was as plain in his dress as he was frugal in his habits, — a man of great decorum and propriety of manners, resembling noticeably in his life and doctrines the Chinese sage Confucius. And yet this good man, a pattern to the loftiest characters of his age, strangled himself. Suicide was not deemed a crime by his followers, among whom were some of the most faultless men of antiquity, especially among the Romans. The doctrines of Zeno were never popular, and were confined to a small though influential party.

With the Stoics ended among the Greeks all inquiry of a philosophical nature worthy of especial mention, until centuries later, when philosophy was revived in the Christian schools of Alexandria, where the Hebrew element of faith was united with the Greek ideal of reason. The struggles of so many great thinkers, from Thales to Aristotle, all ended in doubt and in despair. It was discovered that all of them were wrong, or rather partial; and their error was without a remedy, until "the fulness of time" should reveal more clearly the plan of the great temple of Truth, in which they were laying foundation stones.

The bright and glorious period of Greek philosophy was from Socrates to Aristotle. Philosophical inquiries began about the origin of things, and ended with an elaborate systematization of the forms of thought, which was the most magnificent triumph that the unaided intellect of man ever achieved. Socrates does not found a school, nor elaborate a system. He reveals most precious truths, and stimulates the youth who listen to his instructions by the doctrine that it is the duty of man to pursue a knowledge of himself, which is to be sought in that divine reason which dwells within him, and which also rules the world. He believes in science; he loves truth for its own sake; he loves virtue, which consists in the knowledge of the good.

Plato seizes the weapons of his great master, and is imbued with his spirit. He is full of hope for science and humanity. With soaring boldness he directs his inquiries to futurity, dissatisfied with the present, and cherishing a fond hope of a better existence. He speculates on God and the soul. He is not much interested in physical phenomena; he does not, like Thales, strive to find out the beginning of all things, but the highest good, by which his immortal soul may be refreshed and prepared for the future life, in which he firmly believes. The sensible is an impenetrable empire; but ideas are certitudes, and upon these he dwells with rapt and mystical enthusiasm, — a great poetical rhapsodist, severe dialectician as he is, believing in truth and beauty and goodness.

Then Aristotle, following out the method of his teachers, attempts to exhaust experience, and directs his inquiries into the outward world of sense and observation, but all with the view of discovering from phenomena the unconditional truth, in which he too believes. But everything in this world is fleeting and transitory, and therefore it is not easy to arrive at truth. A cold doubt creeps into the experimental mind of Aristotle, with all his learning and his logic.

The Epicureans arise. Misreading or corrupting the purer teaching of their founder, they place their hopes in sensual enjoyment. They despair of truth.

But the world will not be abandoned to despair. The Stoics rebuke the impiety which is blended with sensualism, and place their hopes on virtue. Yet it is unattainable virtue, while their God is not a moral governor, but subject to necessity.

Thus did those old giants grope about, for they did not know the God who was revealed unto the more spiritual sense of Abraham, Moses, David, and Isaiah. And yet with all their errors they were the greatest benefactors of the ancient world. They gave dignity to intellectual inquiries, while by their lives they set examples of a pure morality.

The Romans added absolutely nothing to the philosophy of the Greeks. Nor were they much interested in any speculative inquiries. It was only the ethical views of the old sages which had attraction or force to them. They were too material to love pure subjective inquiries. They had conquered the land; they disdained the empire of the air.

There were doubtless students of the Greek philosophy among the Romans, perhaps as early as Cato the Censor. But there were only two persons of note in Rome who wrote philosophy, till the time of Cicero, — Aurafanius and Rubinus, — and these were Epicureans.

Cicero was the first to systematize the philosophy which contributed so greatly to his intellectual culture.

But even he added nothing; he was only a commentator and expositor. Nor did he seek to found a system or a school, but merely to influence and instruct men of his own rank. Those subjects which had the greatest attraction for the Grecian schools Cicero regarded as beyond the power of human cognition, and therefore looked upon the practical as the proper domain of human inquiry. Yet he held logic in great esteem, as furnishing rules for methodical investigation. He adopted the doctrine of Socrates as to the pursuit of moral good, and regarded the duties which grow out of the relations of human society as preferable to those of pursuing scientific researches. He had a great contempt for knowledge which could lead neither to the clear apprehension of certitude nor to practical applications. He thought it impossible to arrive at a knowledge of God, or the nature of the soul, or the origin of the world; and thus he was led to look upon the sensible and the present as of more importance than inconclusive inductions, or deductions from a truth not satisfactorily established.

Cicero was an eclectic, seizing on what was true and clear in the ancient systems, and disregarding what was simply a matter of speculation. This is especially seen in his treatise "De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum," in which the opinions of all the Grecian

schools concerning the supreme good are expounded and compared. Nor does he hesitate to declare that the highest happiness consists in the knowledge of Nature and science, which is the true source of pleasure both to gods and men. Yet these are but hopes, in which it does not become us to indulge. It is the actual, the real, the practical, which pre-eminently claims attention, — in other words, the knowledge which will furnish man with a guide and rule of life. Even in the consideration of moral questions Cicero is pursued by the conflict of opinions, although in this department he is most at home. The points he is most anxious to establish are the doctrines of God and the soul. These are most fully treated in his essay "De Natura Deorum," in which he submits the doctrines of the Epicureans and the Stoics to the objections of the Academy. He admits that man is unable to form true conceptions of God, but acknowledges the necessity of assuming one supreme God as the creator and ruler of all things, moving all things, remote from all mortal mixture, and endued with eternal motion in himself. He seems to believe in a divine providence ordering good to man, in the soul's immortality, in free-will, in the dignity of human nature, in the dominion of reason, in the restraint of the passions as necessary to virtue, in a life of public utility, in an immutable morality, in the imitation of the divine.

Thus there is little of original thought in the moral theories of Cicero, which are the result of observation rather than of any philosophical principle. We might enumerate his various opinions, and show what an enlightened mind he possessed; but this would not be the development of philosophy. His views, interesting as they are, and generally wise and lofty, do not indicate any progress of the science. He merely repeats earlier doctrines. These were not without their utility, since they had great influence on the Latin fathers of the Christian Church. He was esteemed for his general enlightenment. He softened down the extreme views of the great thinkers before his day, and clearly unfolded what had become obscured. He was a critic of philosophy, an expositor whom we can scarcely spare.

If anybody advanced philosophy among the Romans it was Epictetus, and even he only in the realm of ethics. Quintius Sextius, in the time of Augustus, had revived the Pythagorean doctrines. Seneca had recommended the severe morality of the Stoics, but added nothing that was not previously known.

The greatest light among the Romans was the Phrygian slave Epictetus, who was born about fifty years after the birth of Jesus Christ, and taught in the time of the Emperor Domitian. Though he did not leave any written treatises, his doctrines were preserved

and handed down by his disciple Arrian, who had for him the reverence that Plato had for Socrates. The loftiness of his recorded views has made some to think that he must have been indebted to Christianity, for no one before him revealed precepts so much in accordance with its spirit. He was a Stoic, but he held in the highest estimation Socrates and Plato. It is not for the solution of metaphysical questions that he was remarkable. He was not a dialectician, but a moralist, and as such takes the highest ground of all the old inquirers after truth. With him, as to Cicero and Seneca, philosophy is the wisdom of life. He sets no value on logic, nor much on physics; but he reveals sentiments of great simplicity and grandeur. His great idea is the purification of the soul. He believes in the severest self-denial; he would guard against the siren spells of pleasure; he would make men feel that in order to be good they must first feel that they are evil. He condemns suicide, although it had been defended by the Stoics. He would complain of no one, not even as to injustice; he would not injure his enemies; he would pardon all offences; he would feel universal compassion, since men sin from ignorance; he would not easily blame, since we have none to condemn but ourselves. He would not strive after honor or office, since we put ourselves in subjection to that we seek or prize; he would constantly

bear in mind that all things are transitory, and that they are not our own. He would bear evils with patience, even as he would practise self-denial of pleasure. He would, in short, be calm, free, keep in subjection his passions, avoid self-indulgence, and practise a broad charity and benevolence. He felt that he owed all to God, — that all was his gift, and that we should thus live in accordance with his will; that we should be grateful not only for our bodies, but for our souls and reason, by which we attain to greatness. And if God has given us such a priceless gift, we should be contented, and not even seek to alter our external relations, which are doubtless for the best. We should wish, indeed, for only what God wills and sends, and we should avoid pride and haughtiness as well as discontent, and seek to fulfil our allotted part.

Such were the moral precepts of Epictetus, in which we see the nearest approach to Christianity that had been made in the ancient world, although there is no proof or probability that he knew anything of Christ or the Christians. And these sublime truths had a great influence, especially on the mind of the most lofty and pure of all the Roman emperors, Marcus Aurelius, who *lived* the principles he had learned from the slave, and whose "Thoughts" are still held in admiration.

Thus did the philosophic speculations about the beginning of things lead to elaborate systems of thought, and end in practical rules of life, until in spirit they had, with Epictetus, harmonized with many of the revealed truths which Christ and his Apostles laid down for the regeneration of the world. Who cannot see in the inquiries of the old Philosopher, — whether into Nature, or the operations of mind, or the existence of God, or the immortality of the soul, or the way to happiness and virtue, — a magnificent triumph of human genius, such as has been exhibited in no other department of human science? Nay, who does not rejoice to see in this slow but ever-advancing development of man's comprehension of the truth the inspiration of that Divine Teacher, that Holy Spirit, which shall at last lead man into all truth?

We regret that our limits preclude a more extended view of the various systems which the old sages propounded, — systems full of errors yet also marked by important gains, but, whether false or true, showing a marvellous reach of the human understanding. Modern researches have discarded many opinions that were highly valued in their day, yet philosophy in its methods of reasoning is scarcely advanced since the time of Aristotle, while the subjects which agitated the Grecian schools have been from time to time revived and rediscussed, and are still unsettled. If

any intellectual pursuit has gone round in perpetual circles, incapable apparently of progression or rest, it is that glorious study of philosophy which has tasked more than any other the mightiest intellects of this world, and which, progressive or not, will never be relinquished without the loss of what is most valuable in human culture.

AUTHORITIES.

For original authorities in reference to the matter of this chapter, read Diogenes Laertius's Lives of the Philosophers; the Writings of Plato and Aristotle; Cicero, De Natura Deorum, De Oratore, De Officiis, De Divinatione, De Finibus, Tusculanæ Disputationes; Xenophon, Memorabilia; Boethius, De Consolatione Philosophiæ; Lucretius.

The great modern authorities are the Germans, and these are very numerous. Among the most famous writers on the history of philosophy are Brucker, Hegel, Brandis, I. G. Buhle, Tennemann, Ritter, Plessing, Schwegler, Hermann, Meiners, Stallbaum, and Spiegel. The History of Ritter is well translated, and is always learned and suggestive. Tennemann, translated by Morell, is a good manual, brief but clear. In connection with the writings of the Germans, the great work of the French Cousin should be consulted.

The English historians of ancient philosophy are not so numerous as the Germans. The work of Enfield is based on Brucker, or is rather an abridgment. Archer Butler's Lectures are suggestive and

able, but discursive and vague. Grote has written learnedly on Socrates and the other great lights. Lewes's Biographical History of Philosophy has the merit of clearness, and is very interesting, but rather superficial. See also Thomas Stanley's History of Philosophy, and the articles in Smith's Dictionary on the leading ancient philosophers. J. W. Donaldson's continuation of K. O. Müller's History of the Literature of Ancient Greece is learned, and should be consulted with Thompson's Notes on Archer Butler. Schleiermacher, on Socrates, translated by Bishop Thirlwall, is well worth attention. There are also fine articles in the Encyclopædias Britannica and Metropolitana.

SOCRATES.

470–399 B. C.

GREEK PHILOSOPHY.

SOCRATES.

GREEK PHILOSOPHY.

TO Socrates the world owes a new method in philosophy and a great example in morals: and it would be difficult to settle whether his influence has been greater as a sage or as a moralist. In either light he is one of the august names of history. He has been venerated for more than two thousand years as a teacher of wisdom, and as a martyr for the truths he taught. He did not commit his precious thoughts to writing; that work was done by his disciples, even as his exalted worth has been published by them, especially by Plato and Xenophon. And if the Greek philosophy did not culminate in him, yet he laid down those principles by which only it could be advanced. As a system-maker, both Plato and Aristotle were greater than he; yet for original genius he was probably their superior, and in important respects he was their master. As a good man, battling with infirmities and temptations and coming off triumphantly, the ancient world has furnished no prouder example.

He was born about 470 or 469 years B. C., and therefore may be said to belong to that brilliant age of Grecian literature and art when Prodicus was teaching rhetoric, and Democritus was speculating about the doctrine of atoms, and Phidias was ornamenting temples, and Alcibiades was giving banquets, and Aristophanes was writing comedies, and Euripides was composing tragedies, and Aspasia was setting fashions, and Cimon was fighting battles, and Pericles was making Athens the centre of Grecian civilization. But he died thirty years after Pericles; so that what is most interesting in his great career took place during and after the Peloponnesian war, — an age still interesting, but not so brilliant as the one which immediately preceded it. It was the age of the Sophists, — those popular but superficial teachers who claimed to be the most advanced of their generation; men who were doubtless accomplished, but were cynical, sceptical, and utilitarian, placing a high estimate on popular favor and an outside life, but very little on pure subjective truth or the wants of the soul. They were paid teachers, and sought pupils from the sons of the rich, — the more eminent of them being Protagoras, Gorgias, Hippias, and Prodicus; men who travelled from city to city, exciting great admiration for their rhetorical skill, and really improving the public speaking of popular orators. They also taught science to a limited extent, and it was

through them that Athenian youth mainly acquired what little knowledge they had of arithmetic and geometry. In loftiness of character they were not equal to those Ionian philosophers, who, prior to Socrates, in the fifth century B. C., speculated on the great problems of the material universe, — the origin of the world, the nature of matter, and the source of power, — and who, if they did not make discoveries, yet evinced great intellectual force.

It was in this sceptical and irreligious age, when all classes were devoted to pleasure and money-making, but when there was great cultivation, especially in arts, that Socrates arose, whose "appearance," says Grote, "was a moral phenomenon."

He was the son of a poor sculptor, and his mother was a midwife. His family was unimportant, although it belonged to an ancient Attic *gens*. Socrates was rescued from his father's workshop by a wealthy citizen who perceived his genius, and who educated him at his own expense. He was twenty when he conversed with Parmenides and Zeno; he was twenty-eight when Phidias adorned the Parthenon; he was forty when he fought at Potidæa and rescued Alcibiades. At this period he was most distinguished for his physical strength and endurance, — a brave and patriotic soldier, insensible to heat and cold, and, though temperate in his habits, capable of drinking more wine, without be-

coming intoxicated, than anybody in Athens. His powerful physique and sensual nature inclined him to self-indulgence, but he early learned to restrain both appetites and passions. His physiognomy was ugly and his person repulsive; he was awkward, obese, and ungainly; his nose was flat, his lips were thick, and his neck large; he rolled his eyes, went barefooted, and wore a dirty old cloak. He spent his time chiefly in the market-place, talking with everybody, old or young, rich or poor, — soldiers, politicians, artisans, or students; visiting even Aspasia, the cultivated, wealthy courtesan, with whom he formed a friendship; so that, although he was very poor, — his whole property being only five minæ (about fifty dollars) a year, — it would seem he lived in "good society."

The ancient Pagans were not so exclusive and aristocratic as the Christians of our day, who are ambitious of social position. Socrates never seemed to think about his social position at all, and uniformly acted as if he were well known and prominent. He was listened to because he was eloquent. His conversation is said to have been charming, and even fascinating. He was an original and ingenious man, different from everybody else, and was therefore what we call "a character."

But there was nothing austere or gloomy about him. Though lofty in his inquiries, and serious in his mind,

he resembled neither a Jewish prophet nor a mediæval sage in his appearance. He looked rather like a Silenus, — very witty, cheerful, good-natured, jocose, and disposed to make people laugh. He enjoined no austerities or penances. He was very attractive to the young, and tolerant of human infirmities, even when he gave the best advice. He was the most human of teachers. Alcibiades was completely fascinated by his talk, and made good resolutions.

His great peculiarity in conversation was to ask questions, — sometimes to gain information, but oftener to puzzle and raise a laugh. He sought to expose ignorance, when it was pretentious; he made all the quacks and shams appear ridiculous. His irony was tremendous; nobody could stand before his searching and unexpected questions, and he made nearly every one with whom he conversed appear either as a fool or an ignoramus. He asked his questions with great apparent modesty, and thus drew a mesh over his opponents from which they could not extricate themselves. His process was the *reductio ad absurdum.* Hence he drew upon himself the wrath of the Sophists. He had no intellectual arrogance, since he professed to know nothing himself, although he was conscious of his own intellectual superiority. He was contented to show that others knew no more than he. He had no passion for admiration, no political ambition, no

desire for social distinction; and he associated with men not for what they could do for him, but for what he could do for them. Although poor, he charged nothing for his teachings. He seemed to despise riches, since riches could only adorn or pamper the body. He did not live in a cell or a cave or a tub, but among the people, as an apostle. He must have accepted gifts, since his means of living were exceedingly small, even for Athens.

He was very practical, even while he lived above the world, absorbed in lofty contemplations. He was always talking with such as the skin-dressers and leather-dealers, using homely language for his illustrations, and uttering plain truths. Yet he was equally at home with poets and philosophers and statesmen. He did not take much interest in that knowledge which was applied merely to rising in the world. Though plain, practical, and even homely in his conversation, he was not utilitarian. Science had no charm to him, since it was directed to utilitarian ends and was uncertain. His sayings had such a lofty, hidden wisdom that very few people understood him: his utterances seemed either paradoxical, or unintelligible, or sophistical. "To the mentally proud and mentally feeble he was equally a bore." Most people probably thought him a nuisance, since he was always about with his questions, puzzling some, confuting others, and reproving all, — careless of

love or hatred, and contemptuous of all conventionalities. So severely dialectical was he that he seemed to be a hair-splitter. The very Sophists, whose ignorance and pretension he exposed, looked upon him as a quibbler; although there were some — so severely trained was the Grecian mind — who saw the drift of his questions, and admired his skill. Probably there are few educated people in these times who could have understood him any more easily than a modern audience, even of scholars, could take in one of the orations of Demosthenes, although they might laugh at the jokes of the sage, and be impressed with the invectives of the orator.

And yet there were defects in Socrates. He was most provokingly sarcastic; he turned everything to ridicule; he remorselessly punctured every gas-bag he met; he heaped contempt on every snob; he threw stones at every glass house, — and everybody lived in one. He was not quite just to the Sophists, for they did not pretend to teach the higher life, but chiefly rhetoric, which is useful in its way. And if they loved applause and riches, and attached themselves to those whom they could utilize, they were not different from most fashionable teachers in any age. And then Socrates was not very delicate in his tastes. He was too much carried away by the fascinations of Aspasia, when he knew that she was not virtuous, — although

it was doubtless her remarkable intellect which most attracted him, not her physical beauty; since in the "Menexenus" (by many ascribed to Plato) he is made to recite at length one of her long orations, and in the "Symposium" he is made to appear absolutely indelicate in his conduct with Alcibiades, and to make what would be abhorrent to us a matter of irony, although there was the severest control of the passions.

To me it has always seemed a strange thing that such an ugly, satirical, provoking man could have won and retained the love of Xanthippe, especially since he was so careless of his dress, and did so little to provide for the wants of the household. I do not wonder that she scolded him, or became very violent in her temper; since, in her worst tirades, he only provokingly laughed at her. A modern Christian woman of society would have left him. But perhaps in Pagan Athens she could not have got a divorce. It is only in these enlightened and progressive times that women desert their husbands when they are tantalizing, or when they do not properly support the family, or spend their time at the clubs or in society,—into which it would seem that Socrates was received, even the best, barefooted and dirty as he was, and for his intellectual gifts alone. Think of such a man being the oracle of a modern salon, either in Paris, London, or New York, with his

From the painting by H. F. Schopin

SOCRATES INSTRUCTING ALCIBIADES

repulsive appearance, and tantalizing and provoking irony. But in artistic Athens, at one time, he was all the fashion. Everybody liked to hear him talk. Everybody was both amused and instructed. He provoked no envy, since he affected modesty and ignorance, apparently asking his questions for information, and was so meanly clad, and lived in such a poor way. Though he provoked animosities, he had many friends. If his language was sarcastic, his affections were kind. He was always surrounded by the most gifted men of his time. The wealthy Crito constantly attended him; Plato and Xenophon were enthusiastic pupils; even Alcibiades was charmed by his conversation; Apollodorus and Antisthenes rarely quitted his side; Cebes and Simonides came from Thebes to hear him; Isocrates and Aristippus followed in his train; Euclid of Megara sought his society, at the risk of his life; the tyrant Critias, and even the Sophist Protagoras, acknowledged his marvellous power.

But I cannot linger longer on the man, with his gifts and peculiarities. More important things demand our attention. I propose briefly to show his contributions to philosophy and ethics.

In regard to the first, I will not dwell on his method, which is both subtle and dialectical. We are not Greeks. Yet it was his method which revolutionized philosophy. That was original. He saw this, — that

the theories of his day were mere opinions; even the lofty speculations of the Ionian philosophers were dreams, and the teachings of the Sophists were mere words. He despised both dreams and words. Speculations ended in the indefinite and insoluble; words ended in rhetoric. Neither dreams nor words revealed the true, the beautiful, and the good,—which, to his mind, were the only realities, the only sure foundation for a philosophical system.

So he propounded certain questions, which, when answered, produced glaring contradictions, from which disputants shrank. Their conclusions broke down their assumptions. They stood convicted of ignorance, to which all his artful and subtle questions tended, and which it was his aim to prove. He showed that they did not know what they affirmed. He proved that their definitions were wrong or incomplete, since they logically led to contradictions; and he showed that for purposes of disputation the same meaning must always attach to the same word, since in ordinary language terms have different meanings, partly true and partly false, which produce confusion in argument. He would be precise and definite, and use the utmost rigor of language, without which inquirers and disputants would not understand each other. Every definition should include the whole thing, and nothing else; otherwise, people would not know what they

were talking about, and would be forced into absurdities.

Thus arose the celebrated "definitions," — the first step in Greek philosophy, — intending to show what *is*, and what *is not*. After demonstrating what is not, Socrates advanced to the demonstration of what is, and thus laid a foundation for certain knowledge: thus he arrived at clear conceptions of justice, friendship, patriotism, courage, and other certitudes, on which truth is based. He wanted only positive truth, — something to build upon, — like Bacon and all great inquirers. Having reached the certain, he would apply it to all the relations of life, and to all kinds of knowledge. Unless knowledge is certain, it is worthless, — there is no foundation to build upon. Uncertain or indefinite knowledge is no knowledge at all; it may be very pretty, or amusing, or ingenious, but no more valuable for philosophical research than poetry or dreams or speculations.

How far the "definitions" of Socrates led to the solution of the great problems of philosophy, in the hands of such dialecticians as Plato and Aristotle, I will not attempt to enter upon here; but this I think I am warranted in saying, that the main object and aim of Socrates, as a teacher of philosophy, were to establish certain elemental truths, concerning which there could be no dispute, and then to reason from them, — since

they were not mere assumptions, but certitudes, and certitudes also which appealed to human consciousness, and therefore could not be overthrown. If I were teaching metaphysics, it would be necessary for me to make clear this method, — the questions and definitions by which Socrates is thought to have laid the foundation of true knowledge, and therefore of all healthful advance in philosophy. But for my present purpose I do not care so much what his *method* was as what his *aim* was.

The aim of Socrates, then, being to find out and teach what is definite and certain, as a foundation of knowledge, — having cleared away the rubbish of ignorance, — he attached very little importance to what is called physical science. And no wonder, since science in his day was very imperfect. There were not facts enough known on which to base sound inductions: better, deductions from established principles. What is deemed most certain in this age was the most uncertain of all knowledge in his day. Scientific knowledge, truly speaking, there was none. It was all speculation. Democritus might resolve the material universe — the earth, the sun, and the stars — into combinations produced by the motion of atoms. But whence the original atoms, and what force gave to them motion? The proudest philosopher, speculating on the origin of the universe, is convicted of ignorance.

Much has been said in praise of the Ionian philosophers; and justly, so far as their genius and loftiness of character are considered. But what did they discover? What truths did they arrive at to serve as foundation-stones of science? They were among the greatest intellects of antiquity. But their method was a wrong one. Their philosophy was based on assumptions and speculations, and therefore was worthless, since they settled nothing. Their science was based on inductions which were not reliable, because of a lack of facts. They drew conclusions as to the origin of the universe from material phenomena. Thales, seeing that plants are sustained by dew and rain, concluded that water was the first beginning of things. Anaximenes, seeing that animals die without air, thought that air was the great primal cause. Then Diogenes of Crete, making a fanciful speculation, imparted to air an intellectual energy. Heraclitus of Ephesus substituted fire for air. None of the illustrious Ionians reached anything higher, than that the first cause of all things must be intelligent. The speculations of succeeding philosophers, living in a more material age, all pertained to the world of matter which they could see with their eyes. And in close connection with speculations about matter, the cause of which they could not settle, was indifference to the spiritual nature of man, which they could not see, and all the wants of the soul, and the existence

of the future state, where the soul alone was of any account. So atheism, and the disbelief of the existence of the soul after death, characterized that materialism. Without God and without a future, there was no stimulus to virtue and no foundation for anything. They said, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," — the essence and spirit of all paganism.

Socrates, seeing how unsatisfactory were all physical inquiries, and what evils materialism introduced into society, making the body everything and the soul nothing, turned his attention to the world within, and "for physics substituted morals." He knew the uncertainty of physical speculation, but believed in the certainty of moral truths. He knew that there was a reality in justice, in friendship, in courage. Like Job, he reposed on consciousness. He turned his attention to what afterwards gave immortality to Descartes. To the scepticism of the Sophists he opposed self-evident truths. He proclaimed the sovereignty of virtue, the universality of moral obligation. "Moral certitude was the platform from which he would survey the universe." It was the ladder by which he would ascend to the loftiest regions of knowledge and of happiness. "Though he was negative in his means, he was positive in his ends." He was the first who had glimpses of the true mission of philosophy, — even to sit in judgment on all knowledge, whether it pertains to art, or politics,

or science; eliminating the false and retaining the true. It was his mission to separate truth from error. He taught the world how to weigh evidence. He would discard any doctrine which, logically carried out, led to absurdity. Instead of turning his attention to outward phenomena, he dwelt on the truths which either God or consciousness reveals. Instead of the creation, he dwelt on the Creator. It was not the body he cared for so much as the soul. Not wealth, not power, not the appetites were the true source of pleasure, but the peace and harmony of the soul. The inquiry should be, not what we shall eat, but how shall we resist temptation; how shall we keep the soul pure; how shall we arrive at virtue; how shall we best serve our country; how shall we best educate our children; how shall we expel worldliness and deceit and lies; how shall we walk with God? — for there is a God, and there is immortality and eternal justice: these are the great certitudes of human life, and it is only by these that the soul will expand and be happy forever.

Thus there was a close connection between his philosophy and his ethics. But it was as a moral teacher that he won his most enduring fame. The teacher of wisdom became subordinate to the man who lived it. As a living Christian is nobler than merely an acute theologian, so he who practises virtue is greater than the one who preaches it. The dissection of the passions

is not so difficult as the regulation of the passions. The moral force of the soul is superior to the utmost grasp of the intellect. The "Thoughts" of Pascal are all the more read because the religious life of Pascal is known to have been lofty. Augustine was the oracle of the Middle Ages, from the radiance of his character as much as from the brilliancy and originality of his intellect. Bernard swayed society more by his sanctity than by his learning. The useful life of Socrates was devoted not merely to establish the grounds of moral obligation, in opposition to the false and worldly teaching of his day, but to the practice of temperance, disinterestedness, and patriotism. He found that the ideas of his contemporaries centred in the pleasure of the body: he would make his body subservient to the welfare of the soul. No writer of antiquity says so much of the soul as Plato, his chosen disciple, and no other one placed so much value on pure subjective knowledge. His longings after love were scarcely exceeded by Augustine or St. Theresa, — not for a divine Spouse, but for the harmony of the soul. With longings after love were united longings after immortality, when the mind would revel forever in the contemplation of eternal ideas and the solution of mysteries, — a sort of Dantean heaven. Virtue became the foundation of happiness, and almost a synonym for knowledge. He discoursed on knowledge in its connection with virtue,

after the fashion of Solomon in his Proverbs. Happiness, virtue, knowledge: this was the Socratic trinity, the three indissolubly connected together, and forming the life of the soul, — the only precious thing a man has, since it is immortal, and therefore to be guarded beyond all bodily and mundane interests. But human nature is frail. The soul is fettered and bewildered; hence the need of some outside influence, some illumination, to guard, or to restrain, or guide. "This inspiration, he was persuaded, was imparted to him from time to time, as he had need, by the monitions of an internal voice which he called δαιμόνιον, or dæmon, — not a personification, like an angel or devil, but a divine sign or supernatural voice." From youth he was accustomed to obey this prohibitory voice, and to speak of it, — a voice "which forbade him to enter on public life," or to take any thought for a prepared defence on his trial. The Fathers of the Church regarded this dæmon as a devil, probably from the name; but it is not far, in its real meaning, from the "divine grace" of St. Augustine and of all men famed for Christian experience, — that restraining grace which keeps good men from folly or sin.

Socrates, again, divorced happiness from pleasure, — identical things, with most pagans. Happiness is the peace and harmony of the soul; pleasure comes from animal sensations, or the gratification of worldly and

ambitious desires, and therefore is often demoralizing. Happiness is an elevated joy, — a beatitude, existing with pain and disease, when the soul is triumphant over the body; while pleasure is transient, and comes from what is perishable. Hence but little account should be made of pain and suffering, or even of death. The life is more than meat, and virtue is its own reward. There is no reward of virtue in mere outward and worldly prosperity; and, with virtue, there is no evil in adversity. One must do right because it is right, not because it is expedient: he must do right, whatever advantages may appear by not doing it. A good citizen must obey the laws, because they are laws: he may not violate them because temporal and immediate advantages are promised. A wise man, and therefore a good man, will be temperate. He must neither eat nor drink to excess. But temperance is not abstinence. Socrates not only enjoined temperance as a great virtue, but he practised it. He was a model of sobriety, and yet he drank wine at feasts, — at those glorious symposia where he discoursed with his friends on the highest themes. While he controlled both appetites and passions, in order to promote true happiness, — that is, the welfare of the soul, — he was not solicitous, as others were, for outward prosperity, which could not extend beyond mortal life. He would show, by teaching and example, that he valued future good beyond any transient joy. Hence he

accepted poverty and physical discomfort as very trifling evils. He did not lacerate the body, like Brahmans and monks, to make the soul independent of it. He was a Greek, and a practical man, — anything but visionary, — and regarded the body as a sacred temple of the soul, to be kept beautiful; for beauty is as much an eternal idea as friendship or love. Hence he threw no contempt on art, since art is based on beauty. He approved of athletic exercises, which strengthened and beautified the body; but he would not defile the body or weaken it, either by lusts or austerities. Passions were not to be exterminated but controlled; and controlled by reason, the light within us, — that which guides to true knowledge, and hence to virtue, and hence to happiness. The law of temperance, therefore, is self-control.

Courage was another of his certitudes, — that which animated the soldier on the battlefield with patriotic glow and lofty self-sacrifice. Life is subordinate to patriotism. It was of but little consequence whether a man died or not, in the discharge of duty. To do right was the main thing, because it was right. "Like George Fox, he would do right if the world were blotted out."

The weak point, to my mind, in the Socratic philosophy, considered in its ethical bearings, was the confounding of virtue with knowledge, and making them identical. Socrates could probably have explained this difficulty away, for no one more than he appreciated the

tyranny of passion and appetite, which thus fettered the will; according to St. Paul, "The evil that I would not, that I do." Men often commit sin when the consequences of it and the nature of it press upon the mind. The knowledge of good and evil does not always restrain a man from doing what he knows will end in grief and shame. The restraint comes, not from knowledge, but from divine aid, which was probably what Socrates meant by his dæmon, — a warning and a constraining power.

"Est Deus in nobis, agitante calescimus illo."

But this is not exactly the knowledge which Socrates meant, or Solomon. Alcibiades was taught to see the loveliness of virtue and to admire it; but *he* had not the divine and restraining power, which Socrates called an "inspiration," and others would call "grace." Yet Socrates himself, with passions and appetites as great as Alcibiades, restrained them, — was assisted to do so by that divine Power which he recognized, and probably adored. How far he felt his personal responsibility to this Power I do not know. The sense of personal responsibility to God is one of the highest manifestations of Christian life, and implies a recognition of God as a personality, as a moral governor whose eye is everywhere, and whose commands are absolute. Many have a vague idea of Providence as pervading and ruling the

universe, without a sense of personal responsibility to Him; in other words, without a "fear" of Him, such as Moses taught, and which is represented by David as "the beginning of wisdom," — the fear to do wrong, not only because it is wrong, but also because it is displeasing to Him who can both punish and reward. I do not believe that Socrates had this idea of God; but I do believe that he recognized His existence and providence. Most people in Greece and Rome had religious instincts, and believed in supernatural forces, who exercised an influence over their destiny, — although they called them "gods," or divinities, and not *the* "God Almighty" whom Moses taught. The existence of temples, the offices of priests, and the consultation of oracles and soothsayers, all point to this. And the people not only believed in the existence of these supernatural powers, to whom they erected temples and statues, but many of them believed in a future state of rewards and punishments, — otherwise the names of Minos and Rhadamanthus and other judges of the dead are unintelligible. Paganism and mythology did not deny the existence and power of gods, — yea, the immortal gods; they only multiplied their number, representing them as avenging deities with human passions and frailties, and offering to them gross and superstitious rites of worship. They had imperfect and even degrading ideas of the gods, but acknowledged their existence and their power. Socrates

emancipated himself from these degrading superstitions, and had a loftier idea of God than the people, or he would not have been accused of impiety, — that is, a dissent from the popular belief; although there is one thing which I cannot understand in his life, and cannot harmonize with his general teachings, — that in his last hours his last act was to command the sacrifice of a cock to Æsculapius.

But whatever may have been his precise and definite ideas of God and immortality, it is clear that he soared beyond his contemporaries in his conceptions of Providence and of duty. He was a reformer and a missionary, preaching a higher morality and revealing loftier truths than any other person that we know of in pagan antiquity; although there lived in India, about two hundred years before his day, a sage whom they called Buddha, whom some modern scholars think approached nearer to Christ than did Socrates or Marcus Aurelius. Very possibly. Have we any reason to adduce that God has ever been without his witnesses on earth, or ever will be? Why could he not have imparted wisdom both to Buddha and Socrates, as he did to Abraham, Moses, and Paul? I look upon Socrates as one of the witnesses and agents of Almighty power on this earth to proclaim exalted truth and turn people from wickedness. He himself — not indistinctly — claimed this mission.

Think what a man he was: truly was he a "moral phenomenon." You see a man of strong animal propensities, but with a lofty soul, appearing in a wicked and materialistic — and possibly atheistic — age, overturning all previous systems of philosophy, and inculcating a new and higher law of morals. You see him spending his whole life, — and a long life, — in disinterested teachings and labors; teaching without pay, attaching himself to youth, working in poverty and discomfort, indifferent to wealth and honor, and even power, inculcating incessantly the worth and dignity of the soul, and its amazing and incalculable superiority to all the pleasures of the body and all the rewards of a worldly life. Who gave to him this wisdom and this almost superhuman virtue? Who gave to him this insight into the fundamental principles of morality? Who, in this respect, made him a greater light and a clearer expounder than the Christian Paley? Who made him, in all spiritual discernment, a wiser man than the gifted John Stuart Mill, who seems to have been a candid searcher after truth? In the wisdom of Socrates you see some higher force than intellectual hardihood or intellectual clearness. How much this pagan did to emancipate and elevate the soul! How much he did to present the vanities and pursuits of worldly men in their true light! What a rebuke were his life and doctrines to the Epicureanism which was pervad-

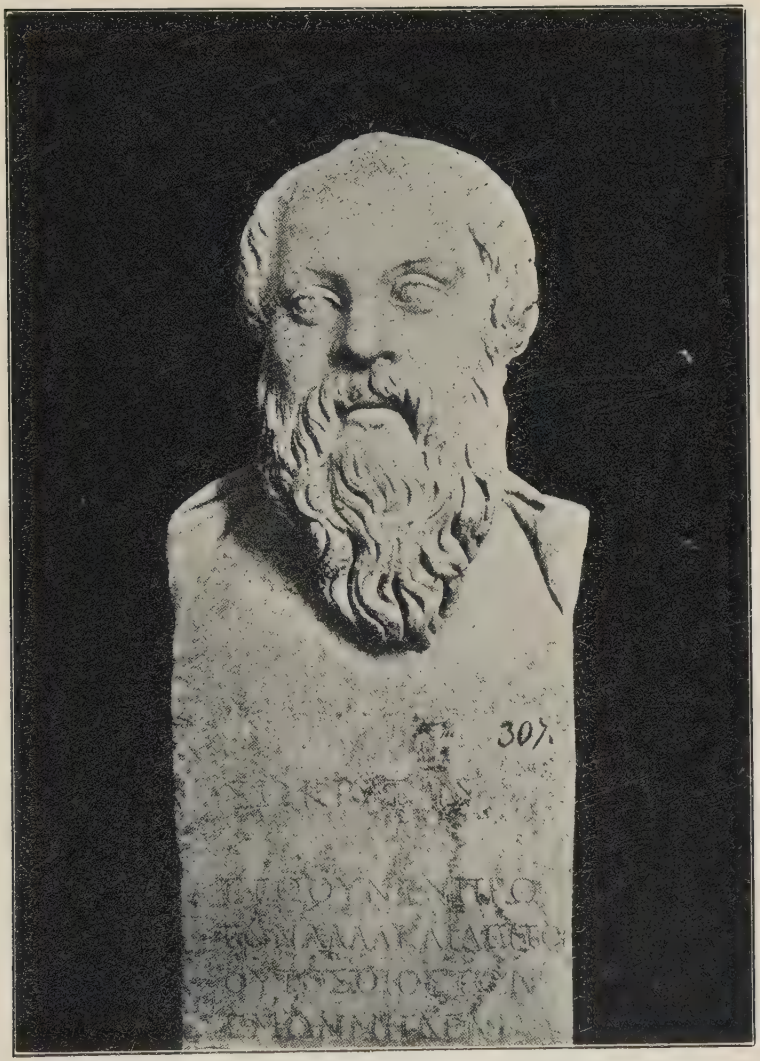
ing all classes of society, and preparing the way for ruin! Who cannot see in him a forerunner of that greater Teacher who was the friend of publicans and sinners; who rejected the leaven of the Pharisees and the speculations of the Sadducees; who scorned the riches and glories of the world; who rebuked everything pretentious and arrogant; who enjoined humility and self-abnegation; who exposed the ignorance and sophistries of ordinary teachers; and who propounded to *his* disciples no such "miserable interrogatory" as "Who shall show us any good?" but a higher question for their solution and that of all pleasure-seeking and money-hunting people to the end of time, — "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

It very rarely happens that a great benefactor escapes persecution, especially if he is persistent in denouncing false opinions which are popular, or prevailing follies and sins. As the Scribes and Pharisees, who had been so severely and openly exposed in all their hypocrisies by our Lord, took the lead in causing his crucifixion, so the Sophists and tyrants of Athens headed the fanatical persecution of Socrates because he exposed their shallowness and worldliness, and stung them to the quick by his sarcasms and ridicule. His elevated morality and lofty spiritual life do not alone account for the persecution. If he had let persons alone, and had not ridiculed their opinions and pre-

tensions, they would probably have let him alone. Galileo aroused the wrath of the Inquisition not for his scientific discoveries, but because he ridiculed the Dominican and Jesuit guardians of the philosophy of the Middle Ages, and because he seemed to undermine the authority of the Scriptures and of the Church: his boldness, his sarcasms, and his mocking spirit were more offensive than his doctrines. The Church did not persecute Kepler or Pascal. The Athenians may have condemned Xenophanes and Anaxagoras, yet not the other Ionian philosophers, nor the lofty speculations of Plato; but they murdered Socrates because they hated him. It was not pleasant to the gay leaders of Athenian society to hear the utter vanity of their worldly lives painted with such unsparing severity, nor was it pleasant to the Sophists and rhetoricians to see their idols overthrown, and they themselves exposed as false teachers and shallow pretenders. No one likes to see himself held up to scorn and mockery; nobody is willing to be shown up as ignorant and conceited. The people of Athens did not like to see their gods ridiculed, for the logical sequence of the teachings of Socrates was to undermine the popular religion. It was very offensive to rich and worldly people to be told that their riches and pleasures were transient and worthless. It was impossible that those rhetoricians who gloried in words,

those Sophists who covered up the truth, those pedants who prided themselves on their technicalities, those politicians who lived by corruption, those worldly fathers who thought only of pushing the fortunes of their children, should not see in Socrates their uncompromising foe; and when he added mockery and ridicule to contempt, and piqued their vanity, and offended their pride, they bitterly hated him and wished him out of the way. My wonder is that he should have been tolerated until he was seventy years of age. Men less offensive than he have been burned alive, and stoned to death, and tortured on the rack, and devoured by lions in the amphitheatre. It is the fate of prophets to be exiled, or slandered, or jeered at, or stigmatized, or banished from society, — to be subjected to some sort of persecution; but when prophets denounce woes, and utter invectives, and provoke by stinging sarcasms, they have generally been killed. No matter how enlightened society is, or tolerant the age, he who utters offensive truths will be disliked, and in some way punished.

So Socrates must meet the fate of all benefactors who make themselves disliked and hated. First the great comic poet Aristophanes, in his comedy called the "Clouds," held him up to ridicule and reproach, and thus prepared the way for his arraignment and trial. He is made to utter a thousand impieties and impertinences.



From the bust in the National Museum, Naples

SOCRATES

He is made to talk like a man of the greatest vanity and conceit, and to throw contempt and scorn on everybody else. It is not probable that the poet entered into any formal conspiracy against him, but found him a good subject of raillery and mockery, since Socrates was then very unpopular, aside from his moral teachings, for being declared by the oracle of Delphi the wisest man in the world, and for having been intimate with the two men whom the Athenians above all men justly execrated, — Critias, the chief of the Thirty Tyrants whom Lysander had imposed, or at least consented to, after the Peloponnesian war; and Alcibiades, whose evil counsels had led to an unfortunate expedition, and who in addition had proved himself a traitor to his country.

Public opinion being now against him, on various grounds he is brought to trial before the Dikastery, — a board of some five hundred judges, leading citizens of Athens. One of his chief accusers was Anytus, — a rich tradesman, of very narrow mind, personally hostile to Socrates because of the influence the philosopher had exerted over his son, yet who then had considerable influence from the active part he had taken in the expulsion of the Thirty Tyrants. The more formidable accuser was Meletus, — a poet and a rhetorician, who had been irritated by Socrates' terrible cross-examinations. The principal charges against

him were, that he did not admit the gods acknowledged by the republic, and that he corrupted the youth of Athens.

In regard to the first charge, it could not be technically proved that he had assailed the gods, for he was exact in his legal worship; but really and virtually there was some foundation for the accusation, since Socrates was a religious innovator if ever there was one. His lofty realism *was* subversive of popular superstitions, when logically carried out. As to the second charge, of corrupting youth, this was utterly groundless; for he had uniformly enjoined courage, and temperance, and obedience to the laws, and patriotism, and the control of the passions, and all the higher sentiments of the soul. But the tendency of his teachings was to create in young men contempt for all institutions based on falsehood or superstition or tyranny, and he openly disapproved some of the existing laws, — such as choosing magistrates by lot, — and freely expressed his opinions. In a narrow and technical sense there was some reason for this charge; for if a young man came to combat his father's business or habits of life or general opinions, in consequence of his own superior enlightenment, it might be made out that he had not sufficient respect for his father, and thus was failing in the virtues of reverence and filial obedience.

Considering the genius and innocence of the accused,

he did not make an able defence; he might have done better. It appeared as if he did not wish to be acquitted. He took no thought of what he should say; he made no preparation for so great an occasion. He made no appeal to the passions and feelings of his judges. He refused the assistance of Lysias, the greatest orator of the day. He brought neither his wife nor children to incline the judges in his favor by their sighs and tears. His discourse was manly, bold, noble, dignified, but without passion and without art. His unpremeditated replies seemed to scorn an elaborate defence. He even seemed to rebuke his judges, rather than to conciliate them. On the culprit's bench he assumed the manners of a teacher. He might easily have saved himself, for there was but a small majority (only five or six at the first vote) for his condemnation. And then he irritated his judges unnecessarily. According to the laws he had the privilege of proposing a substitution for his punishment, which would have been accepted, — exile for instance; but, with a provoking and yet amusing irony, he asked to be supported at the public expense in the Prytaneum: that is, he asked for the highest honor of the republic. For a condemned criminal to ask this was audacity and defiance.

We cannot otherwise suppose than that he did not wish to be acquitted. He wished to die. The time had come; he had fulfilled his mission; he was old

and poor; his condemnation would bring his truths before the world in a more impressive form. He knew the moral greatness of a martyr's death. He reposed in the calm consciousness of having rendered great services, of having made important revelations. He never had an ignoble love of life; death had no terrors to him at any time. So he was perfectly resigned to his fate. Most willingly he accepted the penalty of plain speaking, and presented no serious remonstrances and no indignant denials. Had he pleaded eloquently for his life, he would not have fulfilled his mission. He acted with amazing foresight; he took the only course which would secure a lasting influence. He knew that his death would evoke a new spirit of inquiry, which would spread over the civilized world. It was a public disappointment that he did not defend himself with more earnestness. But he was not seeking applause for his genius, — simply the final triumph of his cause, best secured by martyrdom.

So he received his sentence with evident satisfaction; and in the interval between it and his execution he spent his time in cheerful but lofty conversations with his disciples. He unhesitatingly refused to escape from his prison when the means would have been provided. His last hours were of immortal beauty. His friends were dissolved in tears, but he was calm, composed, triumphant; and when he lay down to die

he prayed that his migration to the unknown land might be propitious. He died without pain, as the hemlock produced only torpor.

His death, as may well be supposed, created a profound impression. It was one of the most memorable events of the pagan world, whose greatest light was extinguished, — no, not extinguished, since it has been shining ever since in the "Memorabilia" of Xenophon and the "Dialogues" of Plato. Too late the Athenians repented of their injustice and cruelty. They erected to his memory a brazen statue, executed by Lysippus. His character and his ideas are alike immortal. The schools of Athens properly date from his death, about the year 400 B. C., and these schools redeemed the shame of her loss of political power. The Socratic philosophy, as expounded by Plato, survived the wrecks of material greatness. It entered even into the Christian schools, especially at Alexandria; it has ever assisted and animated the earnest searchers after the certitudes of life; it has permeated the intellectual world, and found admirers and expounders in all the universities of Europe and America. "No man has ever been found," says Grote, "strong enough to bend the bow of Socrates, the father of philosophy, the most original thinker of antiquity." His teachings gave an immense impulse to civilization, but they could not reform or save the world; it was too

deeply sunk in the infamies and immoralities of an Epicurean life. Nor was his philosophy ever popular in any age of our world. It never will be popular until the light which men hate shall expel the darkness which they love. But it has been the comfort and the joy of an esoteric few, — the witnesses of truth whom God chooses, to keep alive the virtues and the ideas which shall ultimately triumph over all the forces of evil.

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PHIDIAS.

500–430 B. C.

GREEK ART.

PHIDIAS.

GREEK ART.

I SUPPOSE there is no subject, at this time, which interests cultivated people in favored circumstances more than Art. They travel in Europe, they visit galleries, they survey cathedrals, they buy pictures, they collect old china, they learn to draw and paint, they go into ecstasies over statues and bronzes, they fill their houses with bric-à-brac, they assume a cynical criticism, or gossip pedantically, whether they know what they are talking about or not. In short, the contemplation of Art is a fashion, concerning which it is not well to be ignorant, and about which there is an amazing amount of cant, pretension, and borrowed opinions. Artists themselves differ in their judgments, and many who patronize them have no severity of discrimination. We see bad pictures on the walls of private palaces, as well as in public galleries, for which fabulous prices are paid because they are, or are supposed to be, the creation of great masters, or because they are rare like

old books in an antiquarian library, or because fashion has given them a fictitious value, even when these pictures fail to create pleasure or emotion in those who view them. And yet there is great enjoyment, to some people, in the contemplation of a beautiful building or statue or painting, — as of a beautiful landscape or of a glorious sky. The ideas of beauty, of grace, of grandeur, which are eternal, are suggested to the mind and soul; and these cultivate and refine in proportion as the mind and soul are enlarged, especially among the rich, the learned, and the favored classes. So, in high civilizations, especially material, Art is not only a fashion but a great enjoyment, a lofty study, and a theme of general criticism and constant conversation.

It is my object, of course, to present the subject historically, rather than critically. My criticisms would be mere opinions, worth no more than those of thousands of other people. As a public teacher to those who may derive some instruction from my labors and studies, I presume to offer only reflections on Art as it existed among the Greeks, and to show its developments in an historical point of view.

The reader may be surprised that I should venture to present Phidias as one of the benefactors of the world, when so little is known about him, or can be known about him. So far as the man is concerned, I might as well lecture on Melchizedek, or Pharaoh,

or one of the dukes of Edom. There are no materials to construct a personal history which would be interesting, such as abound in reference to Michael Angelo or Raphael. Thus he must be made the mere text of a great subject. The development of Art is an important part of the history of civilization. The influence of Art on human culture and happiness is prodigious. Ancient Grecian art marks one of the stepping-stones of the race. Any man who largely contributed to its development was a world-benefactor.

Now, history says this much of Phidias: that he lived in the time of Pericles, — in the culminating period of Grecian glory, — and ornamented the Parthenon with his unrivalled statues; which Parthenon was to Athens what Solomon's Temple was to Jerusalem,— a wonder, a pride, and a glory. His great contribution to that matchless edifice was the statue of Minerva, made of gold and ivory, forty feet in height, the gold of which alone was worth forty-four talents, — about fifty thousand dollars, — an immense sum when gold was probably worth more than twenty times its present value. All antiquity was unanimous in its praise of this statue, and the exactness and finish of its details were as remarkable as the grandeur and majesty of its proportions. Another of the famous works of Phidias was the bronze statue of Minerva, which was

the glory of the Acropolis. This was sixty feet in height. But even this yielded to the colossal statue of Zeus or Jupiter in his great temple at Olympia, representing the figure in a sitting posture, forty feet high, on a throne made of gold, ebony, ivory, and precious stones. In this statue the immortal artist sought to represent power in repose, as Michael Angelo did in his statue of Moses. So famous was this majestic statue, that it was considered a calamity to die without seeing it; and it served as a model for all subsequent representations of majesty and repose among the ancients. This statue, removed to Constantinople by Theodosius the Great, remained undestroyed until the year 475 A. D.

Phidias also executed various other works, — all famous in his day, — which have, however, perished; but many executed under his superintendence still remain, and are universally admired for their grace and majesty of form. The great master himself was probably vastly superior to any of his disciples, and impressed his genius on the age, having, so far as we know, no rival among his contemporaries, as he has had no successor among the moderns of equal originality and power, unless it be Michael Angelo. His distinguished excellence was simplicity and grandeur; and he was to sculpture what Æschylus was to tragic poetry, — sublime and grand, representing ideal excellence.

Though his works have perished, the ideas he represented still live. His fame is immortal, though we know so little about him. It is based on the admiration of antiquity, on the universal praise which his creations extorted even from the severest critics in an age of Art, when the best energies of an ingenious people were directed to it with the absorbing devotion now given to mechanical inventions and those pursuits which make men rich and comfortable. It would be interesting to know the private life of this great artist, his ardent loves and fierce resentments, his social habits, his public honors and triumphs, — but this is mere speculation. We may presume that he was rich, flattered, and admired, — the companion of great statesmen, rulers, and generals; not a persecuted man like Dante, but honored like Raphael; one of the fortunate of earth, since he was a master of what was most valued in his day.

But it is the work which he represents — and still more comprehensively Art itself in the ancient world — to which I would call your attention, especially the expression of Art in buildings, in statues, and in pictures.

"Art" is itself a very great word, and means many things; it is applied to style in writing, to musical compositions, and even to effective eloquence, as well as to architecture, sculpture, and painting. We

speak of music as artistic, — and not foolishly; of an artistic poet, or an artistic writer like Voltaire or Macaulay; of an artistic preacher, — by which we mean that each and all move the sensibilities and souls and minds of men by adherence to certain harmonies which accord with fixed ideas of grace, beauty, and dignity. Eternal ideas which the mind conceives are the foundation of Art, as they are of Philosophy. Art claims to be creative, and is in a certain sense inspired, like the genius of a poet. However material the creation, the spirit which gives beauty to it is of the mind and soul. Imagination is tasked to its utmost stretch to portray sentiments and passions in the way that makes the deepest impression. The marble bust becomes animated, and even the temple consecrated to the deity becomes religious, in proportion as these suggest the ideas and sentiments which kindle the soul to admiration and awe. These feelings belong to every one by nature, and are most powerful when most felicitously called out by the magic of the master, who requires time and labor to perfect his skill. Art is therefore popular, and appeals to every one, but to those most who live in the great ideas on which it is based. The peasant stands awe-struck before the majestic magnitude of a cathedral; the man of culture is roused to enthusiasm by the contemplation of its grand proportions, or graceful outlines, or bewitching

details, because he sees in them the realization of his ideas of beauty, grace, and majesty, which shine forever in unutterable glory, — indestructible ideas which survive all thrones and empires, and even civilizations. They are as imperishable as stars and suns and rainbows and landscapes, since these unfold new beauties as the mind and soul rest upon them. Whenever, then, man creates an image or a picture which reveals these eternal but indescribable beauties, and calls forth wonder or enthusiasm, and excites refined pleasures, he is an artist. He impresses, to a greater or less degree, every order and class of men. He becomes a benefactor, since he stimulates exalted sentiments, which, after all, are the real glory and pride of life, and the cause of all happiness and virtue, — in cottage or in palace, amid hard toils as well as in luxurious leisure. He is a self-sustained man, since he revels in ideas rather than in praises and honors. Like the man of virtue, he finds in the adoration of the deity he worships his highest reward. Michael Angelo worked preoccupied and rapt, without even the stimulus of praise, to advanced old age, even as Dante lived in the visions to which his imagination gave form and reality. Art is therefore not only self-sustained, but lofty and unselfish. It is indeed the exalted soul going forth triumphant over external difficulties, jubilant and melodious even in poverty and

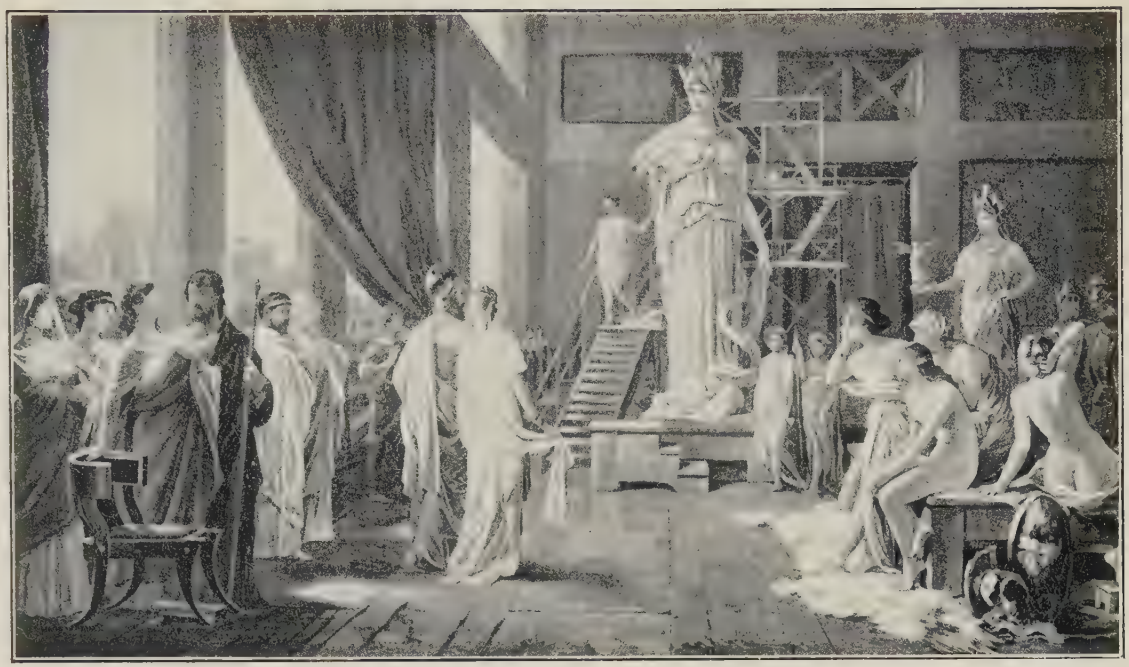
neglect, rising above all the evils of life, revelling in the glories which are impenetrable, and living — for the time — in the realm of deities and angels. The accidents of earth are no more to the true artist striving to reach and impersonate his ideal of beauty and grace, than furniture and tapestries are to a true woman seeking the beatitudes of love. And it is only when there is this soul longing to reach the excellence conceived, for itself alone, that great works have been produced. When Art has been prostituted to pander to perverted tastes, or has been stimulated by thirst for gain, then inferior works only have been created. Fra Angelico lived secluded in a convent when he painted his exquisite Madonnas. It was the exhaustion of the nervous energies consequent on superhuman toils, rather than the luxuries and pleasures which his position and means afforded, which killed Raphael at thirty-seven.

The artists of Greece did not live for utilities any more than did the Ionian philosophers, but in those glorious thoughts and creations which were their chosen joy. Whatever can be reached by the unaided powers of man was attained by them. They represented all that the mind can conceive of the beauty of the human form, and the harmony of architectural proportions. In the realm of beauty and grace modern civilization has no prouder triumphs than those achieved by the

artists of Pagan antiquity. Grecian artists have been the teachers of all nations and all ages in architecture, sculpture, and painting. How far they were themselves original we cannot tell. We do not know how much they were indebted to Egyptians, Phœnicians, and Assyrians, but in real excellence they have never been surpassed. In some respects, their works still remain objects of hopeless imitation: in the realization of ideas of beauty and form, they reached absolute perfection. Hence we have a right to infer that Art can flourish under Pagan as well as Christian influences. It was a comparatively Pagan age in Italy when the great artists arose who succeeded Da Vinci, especially under the patronage of the Medici and the Medicean popes. Christianity has only modified Art by purifying it from sensual attractions. Christianity added very little to Art, until cathedrals arose in their grand proportions and infinite details, and until artists sought to portray in the faces of their Saints and Madonnas the seraphic sentiments of Christian love and angelic purity. Art even declined in the Roman world from the second century after Christ, in spite of all the efforts of Christian emperors. In fact neither Christianity nor Paganism creates it; it seems to be independent of both, and arises from the peculiar genius and circumstances of an age. Make Art a fashion, honor and reward it, crown its great masters with Olympic leaves, direct the

energies of an age or race upon it, and we probably shall have great creations, whether the people are Christian or Pagan. So that Art seems to be a human creation, rather than a divine inspiration. It is the result of genius, stimulated by circumstances and directed to the contemplation of ideal excellence.

Much has been written on those principles upon which Art is supposed to be founded, but not very satisfactorily, although great learning and ingenuity have been displayed. It is difficult to conceive of beauty or grace by definitions, — as difficult as it is to define love or any other ultimate sentiment of the soul. "Metaphysics, mathematics, music, and philosophy," says Cleghorn, "have been called in to analyze, define, demonstrate, or generalize." Great critics, like Burke, Alison, and Stewart, have written interesting treatises on beauty and taste. "Plato represents beauty as the contemplation of the mind. Leibnitz maintained that it consists in perfection. Diderot referred beauty to the idea of relation. Blondel asserted that it was in harmonic proportions. Leigh speaks of it as the music of the age." These definitions do not much assist us. We fall back on our own conceptions or intuitions, as probably did Phidias, although Art in Greece could hardly have attained such perfection without the aid which poetry and history and philosophy alike afforded.



After the painting by Hector Le Roux

PERICLES AND ASPASIA IN THE STUDIO OF PHIDIAS

Art can flourish only as the taste of the people becomes cultivated, and by the assistance of many kinds of knowledge. The mere contemplation of Nature is not enough. Savages have no art at all, even when they live amid grand mountains and beside the ever-changing sea. When Phidias was asked how he conceived his Olympian Jove, he referred to Homer's poems. Michael Angelo was enabled to paint the saints and sibyls of the Sistine Chapel from familiarity with the writings of the Jewish prophets. Isaiah inspired him as truly as Homer inspired Phidias. The artists of the age of Phidias were encouraged and assisted by the great poets, historians, and philosophers who basked in the sunshine of Pericles, even as the great men in the Court of Elizabeth derived no small share of their renown from her glorious appreciation. Great artists appear in clusters, and amid the other constellations that illuminate the intellectual heavens. They all mutually assist each other. When Rome lost her great men, Art declined. When the egotism of Louis XIV. extinguished genius, the great lights in all departments disappeared. So Art is indebted not merely to the contemplation of ideal beauty, but to the influence of great ideas permeating society, — such as when the age of Phidias was kindled with the great thoughts of Socrates, Democritus, Thucydides, Euripides, Aristophanes, and others, whether contemporaries

or not; a sort of Augustan or Elizabethan age, never to appear but once among the same people.

Now, in reference to the history or development of ancient Art, until it culminated in the age of Pericles, we observe that its first expression was in architecture, and was probably the result of religious sentiments, when nations were governed by priests, and not distinguished for intellectual life. Then arose the temples of Egypt, of Assyria, of India. They are grand, massive, imposing, but not graceful or beautiful. They arose from blended superstition and piety, and were probably erected before the palaces of kings, and in Egypt by the dynasty that builded the older pyramids. Even those ambitious and prodigious monuments, which have survived every thing contemporaneous, indicate the reign of sacerdotal monarchs and artists who had no idea of beauty, but only of permanence. They do not indicate civilization, but despotism, — unless it be that they were erected for astronomical purposes, as some maintain, rather than as sepulchres for kings. But this supposition involves great mathematical attainments. It is difficult to conceive of such a waste of labor by enlightened princes, acquainted with astronomical and mathematical knowledge and mechanical forces, for Herodotus tells us that one hundred thousand men toiled on the Great Pyramid during forty years. What for? Surely it is hard to suppose that

such a pile was necessary for the observation of the polar star; and still less probably was it built as a sepulchre for a king, since no covered sarcophagus has ever been found in it, nor have even any hieroglyphics. The mystery seems impenetrable.

But the temples are not mysteries. They were built also by sacerdotal monarchs, in honor of the deity. They must have been enormous, perhaps the most imposing ever built by man: witness the ruins of Karnac — a temple designated by the Greeks as that of Jupiter Ammon — with its large blocks of stone seventy feet in length, on a platform one thousand feet long and three hundred wide, its alleys over a mile in length lined with colossal sphinxes, and all adorned with obelisks and columns, and surrounded with courts and colonnades, like Solomon's temple, to accommodate the crowds of worshippers as well as priests. But these enormous structures were not marked by beauty of proportion or fitness of ornament; they show the power of kings, not the genius of a nation. They may have compelled awe; they did not kindle admiration. The emotion they called out was such as is produced now by great engineering exploits, involving labor and mechanical skill, not suggestive of grace or harmony, which require both taste and genius. The same is probably true of Solomon's temple, built at a much later period, when Art

had been advanced somewhat by the Phœnicians, to whose assistance it seems he was much indebted. We cannot conceive how that famous structure should have employed one hundred and fifty thousand men for eleven years, and have cost what would now be equal to $200,000,000, from any description which has come down to us, or any ruins which remain, unless it were surrounded by vast courts and colonnades, and ornamented by a profuse expenditure of golden plates,— which also evince both power and money rather than architectural genius.

After the erection of temples came the building of palaces for kings, equally distinguished for vast magnitude and mechanical skill, but deficient in taste and beauty, showing the infancy of Art. Yet even these were in imitation of the temples. And as kings became proud and secular, probably their palaces became grander and larger, — like the palaces of Nebuchadnezzar and Rameses the Great and the Persian monarchs at Susa, combining labor, skill, expenditure, dazzling the eye by the number of columns and statues and vast apartments, yet still deficient in beauty and grace.

It was not until the Greeks applied their wonderful genius to architecture that it became the expression of a higher civilization. And, as among Egyptians, Art in Greece is first seen in temples; for the earlier Greeks were religious, although they worshipped the deity under

various names, and in the forms which their own hands did make.

The Dorians, who descended from the mountains of northern Greece, eighty years after the fall of Troy, were the first who added substantially to the architectural art of Asiatic nations, by giving simplicity and harmony to their temples. We see great thickness of columns, a fitting proportion to the capitals, and a beautiful entablature. The horizontal lines of the architrave and cornice predominate over the vertical lines of the columns. The temple arises in the severity of geometrical forms. The Doric column was not entirely a new creation, but was an improvement on the Egyptian model, — less massive, more elegant, fluted, increasing gradually towards the base, with a slight convexed swelling downward, about six diameters in height, superimposed by capitals. "So regular was the plan of the temple, that if the dimensions of a single column and the proportion the entablature should bear to it were given to two individuals acquainted with this style, with directions to compose a temple, they would produce designs exactly similar in size, arrangement, and general proportions." And yet while the style of all the Doric temples is the same, there are hardly two temples alike, being varied by the different proportions of the *column*, which is the peculiar mark of Grecian architecture, even as the *arch* is the feature

of Gothic architecture. The later Doric was less massive than the earlier, but more rich in sculptured ornaments. The pedestal was from two thirds to a whole diameter of a column in height, built in three courses, forming as it were steps to the platform on which the pillar rested. The pillar had twenty flutes, with a capital of half a diameter, supporting the entablature. This again, two diameters in height, was divided into architrave, frieze, and cornice. But the great beauty of the temple was the portico in front, — a forest of columns, supporting the pediment above, which had at the base an angle of about fourteen degrees. From the pediment the beautiful cornice projects with various mouldings, while at the base and at the apex are sculptured monuments representing both men and animals. The graceful outline of the columns, and the variety of light and shade arising from the arrangement of mouldings and capitals, produced an effect exceedingly beautiful. All the glories of this order of architecture culminated in the Parthenon, — built of Pentelic marble, resting on a basement of limestone, surrounded with forty-eight fluted columns of six feet and two inches diameter at the base and thirty-four feet in height, the frieze and pediment elaborately ornamented with reliefs and statues, while within the cella or interior was the statue of Minerva, forty feet high, built of gold and ivory. The walls were decorated

with the rarest paintings, and the cella itself contained countless treasures. This unrivalled temple was not so large as some of the cathedrals of the Middle Ages, but it covered twelve times the ground of the temple of Solomon, and from the summit of the Acropolis it shone as a wonder and a glory. The marbles have crumbled and its ornaments have been removed, but it has formed the model of the most beautiful buildings of the world, from the Quirinus at Rome to the Madeleine at Paris, stimulating alike the genius of Michael Angelo and Christopher Wren, immortal in the ideas it has perpetuated, and immeasurable in the influence it has exerted. Who has copied the Flavian amphitheatre except as a convenient form for exhibitors on the stage, or for the rostrum of an orator? Who has not copied the Parthenon as the severest in its proportions for public buildings for civic purposes?

The Ionic architecture is only a modification of the Doric, — its columns more slender and with a greater number of flutes, and capitals more elaborate, formed with volutes or spiral scrolls, while its pediment, the triangular facing of the portico, is formed with a less angle from the base, — the whole being more suggestive of grace than strength. Vitruvius, the greatest authority among the ancients, says that "the Greeks, in inventing these two kinds of columns, imitated in the one the naked simplicity and aspects

of a man, and in the other the delicacy and ornaments of a woman, whose ringlets appear in the volutes of the capital."

The Corinthian order, which was the most copied by the Romans, was still more ornamented, with foliated capitals, greater height, and a more decorated entablature.

But the principles of all these three orders are substantially the same, — their beauty consisting in the column and horizontal lines, even as vertical lines marked the Gothic. We see the lintel and not the arch; huge blocks of stone perfectly squared, and not small stones irregularly laid; external rather than internal pillars, the cella receiving light from the open roof above, rather than from windows; a simple outline uninterrupted, — generally in the form of a parallelogram, — rather than broken by projections. There is no great variety; but the harmony, the severity, and beauty of proportion will eternally be admired, and can never be improved, — a temple of humanity, cheerful, useful, complete, not aspiring to reach what on earth can never be obtained, with no gloomy vaults speaking of maceration and grief, no lofty towers and spires soaring to the sky, no emblems typical of consecrated sentiments and of immortality beyond the grave, but rich in ornaments drawn from the living world, — of plants and animals, of man in the perfection of physical

strength, of woman in the unapproachable loveliness of grace of form. As the world becomes pagan, intellectual, thrifty, we see the architecture of the Greeks in palaces, banks, halls, theatres, stores, libraries; when it is emotional, poetic, religious, fervent, aspiring, we see the restoration of the Gothic in churches, cathedrals, schools, — for Philosophy and Art did all they could to civilize the world before Christianity was sent to redeem it and prepare mankind for the life above. Such was the temple of the Greeks, reappearing in all the architectures of nations, from the Romans to our own times, — so perfect that no improvements have subsequently been made, no new principles discovered which were not known to Vitruvius. What a creation, to last in its simple beauty for more than two thousand years, and forever to remain a perfect model of its kind! Ah, that was a triumph of Art, the praises of which have been sung for more than sixty generations, and will be sung for hundreds yet to come. But how hidden and forgotten the great artists who invented all this, showing the littleness of man and the greatness of Art itself. How true that old Greek saying, "Life is short, but Art is long."

But the genius displayed in sculpture was equally remarkable, and was carried to the same perfection. The Greeks did not originate sculpture. We read of

sculptured images from remotest antiquity. Assyria, Egypt, and India are full of relics. But these are rude, unformed, without grace, without expression, though often colossal and grand. There are but few traces of emotion, or passion, or intellectual force. Everything which has come down from the ancient monarchies is calm, impassive, imperturbable. Nor is there a severe beauty of form. There is no grace, no loveliness, that we should desire them. Nature was not severely studied. We see no aspiration after what is ideal. Sometimes the sculptures are grotesque, unnatural, and impure. They are emblematic of strange deities, or are rude monuments of heroes and kings. They are curious, but they do not inspire us. We do not copy them; we turn away from them. They do not live, and they are not reproduced. Art could spare them all, except as illustrations of its progress. They are merely historical monuments, to show despotism and superstition, and the degradation of the people.

But this cannot be said of the statues which the Greeks created, or improved from ancient models. In the sculptures of the Greeks we see the utmost perfection of the human form, both of man and woman, learned by the constant study of anatomy and of nude figures of the greatest beauty. A famous statue represented the combined excellences of perhaps one hun-

dred different persons. The study of the human figure became a noble object of ambition, and led to conceptions of ideal grace and loveliness such as no one human being perhaps ever possessed in all respects. And not merely grace and beauty were thus represented in marble or bronze, but dignity, repose, majesty. We see in those figures which have survived the ravages of time suggestions of motion, rest, grace, grandeur, — every attitude, every posture, every variety of form. We see also every passion which moves the human soul, — grief, rage, agony, shame, joy, peace. But it is the perfection of form which is most wonderful and striking. Nor did the artists work to please the vulgar rich, but to realize their own highest conceptions, and to represent sentiments in which the whole nation shared. They sought to instruct; they appealed to the highest intelligence. "Some sought to represent tender beauty, others daring power, and others again heroic grandeur." Grecian statuary began with ideal representations of deities; then it produced the figures of gods and goddesses in mortal forms; then the portrait-statues of distinguished men. This art was later in its development than architecture, since it was directed to ornamenting what had already nearly reached perfection. Thus Phidias ornamented the Parthenon in the time of Pericles, when sculpture was purest and most ideal. In some points of view

it declined after Phidias, but in other respects it continued to improve until it culminated in Lysippus, who was contemporaneous with Alexander. He is said to have executed fifteen hundred statues, and to have displayed great energy of execution. He idealized human beauty, and imitated Nature to the minutest details. He alone was selected to make the statue of Alexander, which is lost. None of his works, which were chiefly in bronze, are extant; but it is supposed that the famous *Hercules* and the *Torso Belvedere* are copies from his works, since his favorite subject was Hercules. We only can judge of his great merits from his transcendent reputation and the criticism of classic writers, and also from the works that have come down to us which are supposed to be imitations of his masterpieces. It was his scholars who sculptured the *Colossus of Rhodes*, the *Laocoön*, and the *Dying Gladiator*. After him plastic art rapidly degenerated, since it appealed to passion, especially under Praxiteles, who was famous for his undraped Venuses and the expression of sensual charms. The decline of Art was rapid as men became rich, and Epicurean life was sought as the highest good. Skill of execution did not decline, but ideal beauty was lost sight of, until the art itself was prostituted — as among the Romans — to please perverted tastes or to flatter senatorial pride.

But our present theme is not the history of decline,

but of the original creations of genius, which have been copied in every succeeding age, and which probably will never be surpassed, except in some inferior respects, — in mere mechanical skill. The *Olympian Jove* of Phidias lives perhaps in the *Moses* of Michael Angelo, great as was his original genius, even as the *Venus* of Praxiteles may have been reproduced in Powers's *Greek Slave*. The great masters had innumerable imitators, not merely in the representation of man but of animals. What a study did these artists excite, especially in their own age, and how honorable did they make their noble profession even in degenerate times! They were the schoolmasters of thousands and tens of thousands, perpetuating their ideas to remotest generations. Their instructions were not lost, and never can be lost in a realm which constitutes one of the proudest features of our own civilization. It is true that Christianity does not teach æsthetic culture, but it teaches the duties which prevent the eclipse of Art. In this way it comes to the rescue of Art when in danger of being perverted. Grecian Art was consecrated to Paganism, — but, revived, it may indirectly be made tributary to Christianity, like music and eloquence. It will not conserve Christianity, but may be purified by it, even if able to flourish without it.

I can now only glance at the third development of Grecian Art, as seen in painting.

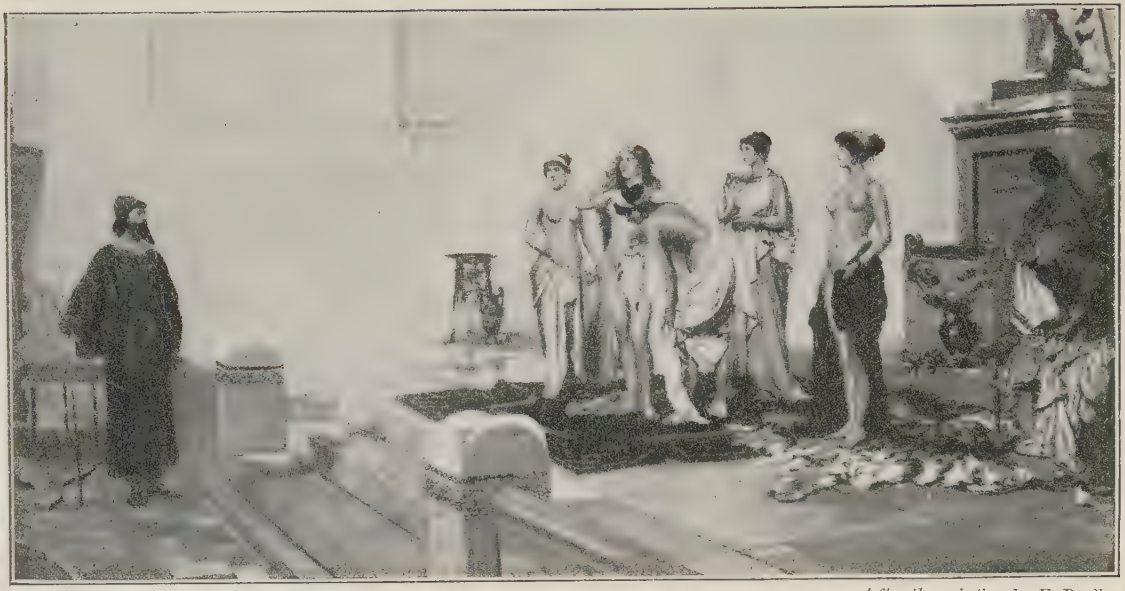
It is not probable that such perfection was reached in this art as in sculpture and architecture. We have no means of forming incontrovertible opinions. Most of the ancient pictures have perished; and those that remain, while they show correctness of drawing and brilliant coloring, do not give us as high conceptions of ideal beauties as do the pictures of the great masters of modern times. But we have the testimony of the ancients themselves, who were as enthusiastic in their admiration of pictures as they were of statues. And since their taste was severe, and their sensibility as to beauty unquestioned, we have a right to infer that even painting was carried to considerable perfection among the Greeks. We read of celebrated schools, — like the modern schools of Florence, Rome, Bologna, Venice, and Naples. The schools of Sicyon, Corinth, Athens, and Rhodes were as famous in their day as the modern schools to which I have alluded.

Painting, being strictly a decoration, did not reach a high degree of art, like sculpture, until architecture was perfected. But painting is very ancient. The walls of Babylon, it is asserted by the ancient historians, were covered with paintings. Many survive amid the ruins of Egypt and on the chests of mummies; though these are comparatively rude, without regard to light and shade, like Chinese pictures. Nor do they represent passions and emotions. They aimed

to perpetuate historical events, not ideas. The first paintings of the Greeks simply marked out the outline of figures. Next appeared the inner markings, as we see in ancient vases, on a white ground. The effects of light and shade were then introduced; and then the application of colors in accordance with Nature. Cimon of Cleonæ, in the eightieth Olympiad, invented the art of "fore-shortening," and hence was the first painter of perspective. Polygnotus, a contemporary of Phidias, was nearly as famous for painting as he was for sculpture. He was the first who painted woman with brilliant drapery and variegated head-dresses. He gave to the cheek the blush and to his draperies gracefulness. He is said to have been a great epic painter, as Phidias was an epic sculptor and Homer an epic poet. He expressed, like them, ideal beauty. But his pictures had no elaborate grouping, which is one of the excellences of modern art. His figures were all in regular lines, like the bas-reliefs on a frieze. He took his subjects from epic poetry. He is celebrated for his accurate drawing, and for the charm and grace of his female figures. He also gave great grandeur to his figures, like Michael Angelo. Contemporary with him was Dionysius, who was remarkable for expression, and Micon, who was skilled in painting horses.

With Apollodorus of Athens, who flourished toward the close of the fifth century before Christ, there

was a new development, — that of dramatic effect. His aim was to deceive the eye of the spectator by the appearance of reality. He painted men and things as they appeared. He also improved coloring, invented *chiaroscuro* (or the art of relief by a proper distribution of the lights and shadows), and thus obtained what is called "tone." He prepared the way for Zeuxis, who surpassed him in the power to give beauty to forms. The *Helen* of Zeuxis was painted from five of the most beautiful women of Croton. He aimed at complete illusion of the senses, as in the instance recorded of his grape picture. His style was modified by the contemplation of the sculptures of Phidias, and he taught the true method of grouping. His marked excellence was in the contrast of light and shade. He did not paint ideal excellence; he was not sufficiently elevated in his own moral sentiments to elevate the feelings of others: he painted sensuous beauty as it appeared in the models which he used. But he was greatly extolled, and accumulated a great fortune, like Rubens, and lived ostentatiously, as rich and fortunate men ever have lived who do not possess elevation of sentiment. His headquarters were not at Athens, but at Ephesus, — a city which also produced Parrhasius, to whom Zeuxis himself gave the palm, since he deceived the painter by his curtain, while Zeuxis only deceived birds by his grapes. Parrhasius established



After the painting by E. Pagliano

ZEUXIS CHOOSING MODELS FROM AMONG THE BEAUTIES OF KROTON FOR HIS PICTURE OF HELEN

the rule of proportions, which was followed by succeeding artists. He was a very luxurious and arrogant man, and fancied he had reached the perfection of his art.

But if that was ever reached among the ancients it was by Apelles, — the Titian of that day, — who united the rich coloring of the Ionian school with the scientific severity of the school of Sicyonia. He alone was permitted to paint the figure of Alexander, as Lysippus only was allowed to represent him in bronze. He invented ivory black, and was the first to cover his pictures with a coating of varnish, to bring out the colors and preserve them. His distinguishing excellency was grace, — "that artless balance of motion and repose," says Fuseli, "springing from character and founded on propriety." Others may have equalled him in perspective, accuracy, and finish, but he added a refinement of taste which placed him on the throne which is now given to Raphael. No artists could complete his unfinished pictures. He courted the severest criticism, and, like Michael Angelo, had no jealousy of the fame of other artists; he reposed in the greatness of his own self-consciousness. He must have made enormous sums of money, since one of his pictures — a Venus rising out of the sea, painted for a temple in Cos, and afterwards removed by Augustus to Rome — cost one hundred talents (equal to about one hundred thousand

dollars), — a greater sum, I apprehend, than was ever paid to a modern artist for a single picture, certainly in view of the relative value of gold. In this picture female grace was impersonated.

After Apelles the art declined, although there were distinguished artists for several centuries. They generally flocked to Rome, where there was the greatest luxury and extravagance, and they pandered to vanity and a vitiated taste. The masterpieces of the old artists brought enormous sums, as the works of the old masters do now; and they were brought to Rome by the conquerors, as the masterpieces of Italy and Spain and Flanders were brought to Paris by Napoleon. So Rome gradually possessed the best pictures of the world, without stimulating the art or making new creations; it could appreciate genius, but creative genius expired with Grecian liberties and glories. Rome multiplied and rewarded painters, but none of them were famous. Pictures were as common as statues. Even Varro, a learned writer, had a gallery of seven hundred portraits. Pictures were placed in all the baths, theatres, temples, and palaces, as were statues.

We are forced, therefore, to believe that the Greeks carried painting to the same perfection that they did sculpture, not only from the praises of critics like Cicero and Pliny, but from the universal enthusiasm which the painters created and the enormous prices they received.

Whether Polygnotus was equal to Michael Angelo, Zeuxis to Titian, and Apelles to Raphael, we cannot tell. Their works have perished. What remains to us, in the mural decorations of Pompeii and the designs on vases, seem to confirm the criticisms of the ancients. We cannot conceive how the Greek painters could have equalled the great Italian masters, since they had fewer colors, and did not make use of oil, but of gums mixed with the white of eggs, and resin and wax, which mixture we call "encaustic." Yet it is not the perfection of colors or of design, or mechanical aids, or exact imitations, or perspective skill, which constitute the highest excellence of the painter, but his power of creation, — the power of giving ideal beauty and grandeur and grace, inspired by the contemplation of eternal ideas, an excellence which appears in all the masterworks of the Greeks, and such as has not been surpassed by the moderns.

But Art was not confined to architecture, sculpture, and painting alone. It equally appears in all the literature of Greece. The Greek poets were artists, as also the orators and historians, in the highest sense. They were the creators of *style* in writing, which we do not see in the literature of the Jews or other Oriental nations, marvellous and profound as were their thoughts. The Greeks had the power of putting things so as to make the greatest impression on the mind. This

especially appears among such poets as Sophocles and Euripides, such orators as Pericles and Demosthenes, such historians as Xenophon and Thucydides, such philosophers as Plato and Aristotle. We see in their finished productions no repetitions, no useless expressions, no superfluity or redundancy, no careless arrangement, no words even in bad taste, save in the abusive epithets in which the orators indulged. All is as harmonious in their literary style as in plastic art; while we read, unexpected pleasures arise in the mind, based on beauty and harmony, somewhat similar to the enjoyment of artistic music, or as when we read Voltaire, Rousseau, or Macaulay. We perceive art in the arrangement of sentences, in the rhythm, in the symmetry of construction. We see means adapted to an end. The Latin races are most marked for artistic writing, especially the French, who seem to be copyists of Greek and Roman models. We see very little of this artistic writing among the Germans, who seem to disdain it as much as an English lawyer or statesman does rhetoric. It is in rhetoric and poetry that Art most strikingly appears in the writings of the Greeks, and this was perfected by the Athenian Sophists. But all the Greeks, and after them the Romans, especially in the time of Cicero, sought the graces and fascinations of style. Style is an art, and all art is eternal.

It is probable also that Art was manifested to a high degree in the conversation of the Greeks, as they were brilliant talkers, — like Brougham, Mackintosh, Madame de Staël, and Macaulay, in our times.

But I may not follow out, as I could wish, this department of Art, — generally overlooked, certainly not dwelt upon like pictures and statues. An interesting and captivating writer or speaker is as much an artist as a sculptor or musician; and unless authors possess art their works are apt to perish, like those of Varro, the most learned of the Romans. It is the exquisite art seen in all the writings of Cicero which makes them classic; it is the style rather than the ideas. The same may be said of Horace: it is his elegance of style and language which makes him immortal. It is this singular fascination of language and style which keeps Hume on the list of standard and classic writers, like Pascal, Goldsmith, Voltaire, and Fénelon. It is on account of these excellences that the classical writers of antiquity will never lose their popularity, and for which they will be imitated, and by which they have exerted their vast influence.

Art, therefore, in every department, was carried to high excellence by the Greeks, and they thus became the teachers of all succeeding races and ages. Artists are great exponents of civilization. They are generally learned men, appreciated by the cultivated classes, and

usually associating with the rich and proud. The Popes rewarded artists while they crushed reformers. I never read of an artist who was persecuted. Men do not turn with disdain or anger in disputing with them, as they do from great moral teachers; artists provoke no opposition and stir up no hostile passions. It is the men who propound agitating ideas and who revolutionize the character of nations, that are persecuted. Artists create no revolutions, not even of thought. Savonarola kindled a greater fire in Florence than all the artists whom the Medici ever patronized. But if the artists cannot wear the crown of apostles and reformers and sages, — the men who save nations, men like Socrates, Luther, Bacon, Descartes, Burke, — yet they have fewer evils to contend with in their progress, and they still leave a mighty impression behind them, not like that of Moses and Paul, but still an influence; they kindle the enthusiasm of a class that cannot be kindled by ideas, and furnish inexhaustible themes of conversation to cultivated people and make life itself graceful and beautiful, enriching our houses and adorning our consecrated temples and elevating our better sentiments. The great artist is himself immortal, even if he contributes very little to save the world. Art seeks only the perfection of outward form; it is mundane in its labors; it does not aspire to those beatitudes which shine beyond the grave. And yet it

is a great and invaluable assistance to those who would communicate great truths, since it puts them in attractive forms and increases the impression of the truths themselves. To the orator, the historian, the philosopher, and the poet, a knowledge of the principles of Art is as important as to the architect, the sculptor, and the painter; and these principles are learned only by study and labor, while they cannot be even conceived of by ordinary men.

Thus it would appear that in all departments and in all the developments of Art the Greeks were the teachers of the modern European nations, as well of the ancient Romans; and their teachings will be invaluable to all the nations which are yet to arise, since no great improvement has been made on the models which have come down to us, and no new principles have been discovered which were not known to them. In everything which pertains to Art they were benefactors of the human race, and gave a great impulse to civilization.

AUTHORITIES.

Müller's De Phidiæ Vita, Vitruvius, Aristotle. Pliny, Ovid, Martial, Lucian, and Cicero have made criticisms on ancient Art. The modern writers are very numerous, especially among the Germans and the French. From these may be selected Winckelmann's History of Ancient Art; Müller's Remains of Ancient Art; Donaldson's Antiquities of Athens; Sir W. Gill's Pompeiana; Montfauçon's Antiquité Expliquée en Figures; Ancient Marbles of the British Museum, by Taylor Combe; Mayer's Kunstgeschicte; Cleghorn's Ancient and Modern Art; Wilkinson's Topography of Thebes; Dodwell's Classical Tour; Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians; Flaxman's Lectures on Sculpture; Fuseli's Lectures; Sir Joshua Reynolds's Lectures; also see five articles on Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, in the Encyclopædia Britannica, and in Smith's Dictionary.

LITERARY GENIUS:

THE GREEK AND ROMAN CLASSICS.

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WE know but little of the literature of antiquity until the Greeks applied to it the principles of art. The Sanskrit language has revealed the ancient literature of the Hindus, which is chiefly confined to mystical religious poetry, and which has already been mentioned in the chapter on "Ancient Religions." There was no history worthy the name in India. The Egyptians and Babylonians recorded the triumphs of warriors and domestic events, but those were mere annals without literary value. It is true that the literary remains of Egypt show a reading and writing people as early as three thousand years before Christ, and in their various styles of pen-language reveal a remarkable variety of departments and topics treated, — books of religion, of theology, of ethics, of medicine, of astronomy, of magic, of mythic poetry, of fiction, of personal correspondence, etc. The difficulties of deciphering them, however, and their many peculiarities and for-

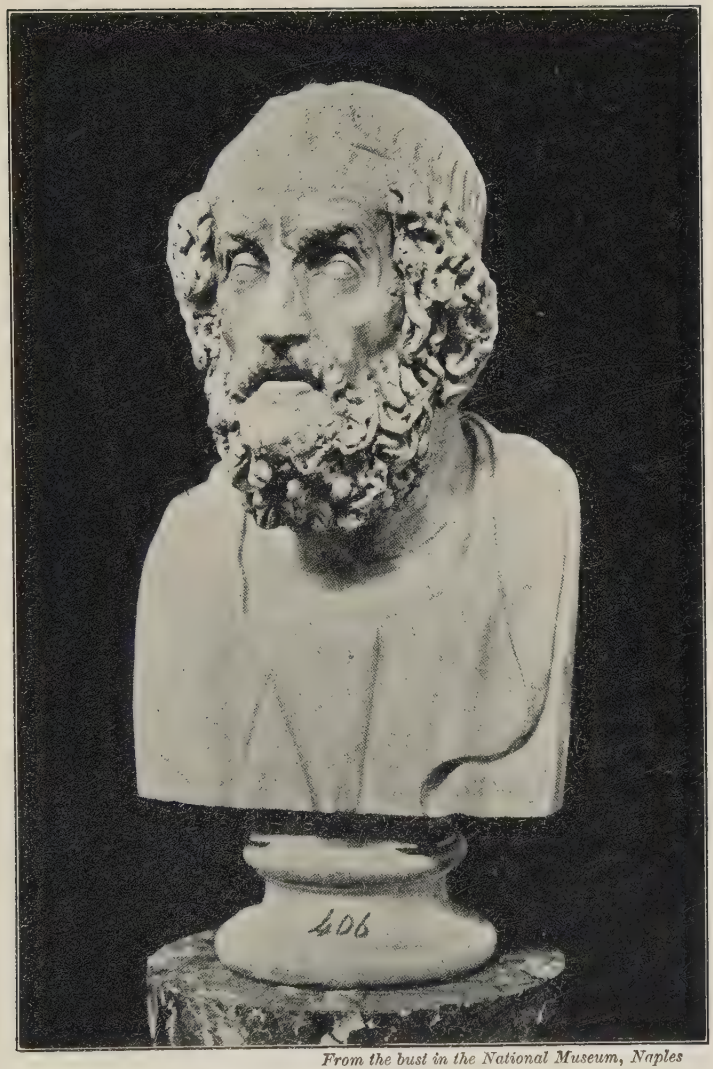
malisms of style, render them rather of curious historical and archæological than of literary interest. The Chinese annals also extend back to a remote period, for Confucius wrote history as well as ethics; but Chinese literature has comparatively little interest for us, as also that of all Oriental nations, except the Hindu Vedas and the Persian Zend-Avesta, and a few other poems showing great fertility of the imagination, with a peculiar tenderness and pathos.

Accordingly, as I wish to show chiefly the triumphs of ancient genius when directed to literature generally, and especially such as has had a direct influence upon our modern literature, I confine myself to that of Greece and Rome. Even our present civilization delights in the masterpieces of the classical poets, historians, orators, and essayists, and seeks to rival them. Long before Christianity became a power the great literary artists of Greece had reached perfection in style and language, especially in Athens, to which city youths were sent to be educated, as to a sort of university town where the highest culture was known. Educated Romans were as familiar with the Greek classics as they were with those of their own country, and could talk Greek as the modern cultivated Germans talk French. Without the aid of Greece, Rome could never have reached the civilization to which she attained.

How rich in poetry was classical antiquity, whether sung in the Greek or Latin language! In all those qualities which give immortality classical poetry has never been surpassed, whether in simplicity, in passion, in fervor, in fidelity to nature, in wit, or in imagination. It existed from the early times of Greek civilization, and continued to within a brief period of the fall of the Roman empire. With the rich accumulation of ages the Romans were familiar. They knew nothing indeed of the solitary grandeur of the Jewish muse, or the Nature-myths of the ante-Homeric singers; but they possessed the Iliad and the Odyssey, with their wonderful truthfulness, their clear portraiture of character, their absence of all affectation, their serenity and cheerfulness, their good sense and healthful sentiments, withal so original that the germ of almost every character which has since figured in epic poetry can be found in them.

We see in Homer a poet of the first class, holding the same place in literature that Plato holds in philosophy or Newton in science, and exercising a mighty influence on all the ages which have succeeded him. He was born, probably, at Smyrna, an Ionian city; the dates attributed to him range from the seventh to the twelfth century before Christ. Herodotus puts him at 850 B. C. For nearly three thousand years his immortal creations have been the

delight and the inspiration of men of genius; and they are as marvellous to us as they were to the Athenians, since they are exponents of the learning as well as of the consecrated sentiments of the heroic ages. We find in them no pomp of words, no far-fetched thoughts, no theatrical turgidity, no ambitious speculations, no indefinite longings; but we see the manners and customs of the primitive nations, the sights and wonders of the external world, the marvellously interesting traits of human nature as it was and is; and with these we have lessons of moral wisdom, — all recorded with singular simplicity yet astonishing artistic skill. We find in the Homeric narrative accuracy, delicacy, naturalness, with grandeur, sentiment, and beauty, such as Phidias represented in his statues of Zeus. No poems have ever been more popular, and none have extorted greater admiration from critics. Like Shakspeare, Homer is a kind of Bible to both the learned and unlearned among all peoples and ages, — one of the prodigies of the world. His poems form the basis of Greek literature, and are the best understood and the most widely popular of all Grecian compositions. The unconscious simplicity of the Homeric narrative, its high moral tone, its vivid pictures, its graphic details, and its religious spirit create an enthusiasm such as few works of genius can claim. Moreover it presents a painting of society, with its simplicity



From the bust in the National Museum, Naples

HOMER

and ferocity, its good and evil passions, its tenderness and its fierceness, such as no other poem affords. Its influence on the popular mythology of the Greeks has been already alluded to. If Homer did not create the Grecian theogony, he gave form and fascination to it. Nor is it necessary to speak of any other Grecian epic, when the Iliad and the Odyssey attest the perfection which was attained one hundred and twenty years before Hesiod was born. Grote thinks that the Iliad and the Odyssey were produced at some period between 850 B. C. and 776 B. C.

In lyrical poetry the Greeks were no less remarkable; indeed they attained to what may be called absolute perfection, owing to the intimate connection between poetry and music, and the wonderful elasticity and adaptiveness of their language. Who has surpassed Pindar in artistic skill? His triumphal odes are pæans, in which piety breaks out in expressions of the deepest awe and the most elevated sentiments of moral wisdom. They alone of all his writings have descended to us, but these, made up as they are of odic fragments, songs, dirges, and panegyrics, show the great excellence to which he attained. He was so celebrated that he was employed by the different States and princes of Greece to compose choral songs for special occasions, especially for the public games. Although a Theban, he was held in the highest esti-

mation by the Athenians, and was courted by kings and princes. Born in Thebes 522 B. C., he died probably in his eightieth year, being contemporary with Æschylus and the battle of Marathon. We possess also fragments of Sappho, Simonides, Anacreon, and others, enough to show that could the lyrical poetry of Greece be recovered, we should probably possess the richest collection that the world has produced.

Greek dramatic poetry was still more varied and remarkable. Even the great masterpieces of Sophocles and Euripides now extant were regarded by their contemporaries as inferior to many other Greek tragedies utterly unknown to us. The great creator of the Greek drama was Æschylus, born at Eleusis 525 B. C. It was not till the age of forty-one that he gained his first prize. Sixteen years afterward, defeated by Sophocles, he quitted Athens in disgust and went to the court of Hiero, king of Syracuse. But he was always held, even at Athens, in the highest honor, and his pieces were frequently reproduced upon the stage. It was not so much the object of Æschylus to amuse an audience as to instruct and elevate it. He combined religious feeling with lofty moral sentiment, and had unrivalled power over the realm of astonishment and terror. "At his summons," says Sir Walter Scott, "the mysterious and tremendous volume of destiny, in which is inscribed the

doom of gods and men, seemed to display its leaves of iron before the appalled spectators; the more than mortal voices of Deities, Titans, and departed heroes were heard in awful conference; heaven bowed, and its divinities descended; earth yawned, and gave up the pale spectres of the dead and yet more undefined and ghastly forms of those infernal deities who struck horror into the gods themselves." His imagination dwells in the loftiest regions of the old mythology of Greece; his tone is always pure and moral, though stern and harsh; he appeals to the most violent passions, and is full of the boldest metaphors. In sublimity Æschylus has never been surpassed. He was in poetry what Phidias and Michael Angelo were in art. The critics say that his sublimity of diction is sometimes carried to an extreme, so that his language becomes inflated. His characters, like his sentiments, were sublime, — they were gods and heroes of colossal magnitude. His religious views were Homeric, and he sought to animate his countrymen to deeds of glory, as it became one of the generals who fought at Marathon to do. He was an unconscious genius, and worked like Homer without a knowledge of artistic laws. He was proud and impatient, and his poetry was religious rather than moral. He wrote seventy plays, of which only seven are extant; but these are immortal, among the greatest creations of human

genius, like the dramas of Shakspeare. He died in Sicily, in the sixty-ninth year of his age.

The fame of Sophocles is scarcely less than that of Æschylus. He was twenty-seven years of age when he publicly appeared as a poet. He was born in Colonus, in the suburbs of Athens, 495 B. C., and was the contemporary of Herodotus, of Pericles, of Pindar, of Phidias, of Socrates, of Cimon, of Euripides, — the era of great men, the period of the Peloponnesian War, when everything that was elegant and intellectual culminated at Athens. Sophocles had every element of character and person to fascinate the Greeks, — beauty of face, symmetry of form, skill in gymnastics, calmness and dignity of manner, a cheerful and amiable temper, a ready wit, a meditative piety, a spontaneity of genius, an affectionate admiration for talent, and patriotic devotion to his country. His tragedies, by the universal consent of the best critics, are the perfection of the Greek drama; and they moreover maintain that he has no rival, Æschylus and Shakspeare alone excepted, in the whole realm of dramatic poetry. It was the peculiarity of Sophocles to excite emotions of sorrow and compassion. He loved to paint forlorn heroes. He was human in all his sympathies, perhaps not so religious as Æschylus, but as severely ethical; not so sublime, but more perfect in art. His sufferers are not the victims of

an inexorable destiny, but of their own follies. Nor does he even excite emotion apart from a moral end. He lived to be ninety years old, and produced the most beautiful of his tragedies in his eightieth year, the "Œdipus at Colonus." Sophocles wrote the astonishing number of one hundred and thirty plays, and carried off the first prize twenty-four times. His "Antigone" was written when he was forty-five, and when Euripides had already gained a prize. Only seven of his tragedies have survived, but these are priceless treasures.

Euripides, the last of the great triumvirate of the Greek tragic poets, was born at Athens, 485 B. C. He had not the sublimity of Æschylus, nor the touching pathos of Sophocles, nor the stern simplicity of either, but in seductive beauty and successful appeal to passion was superior to both. In his tragedies the passion of love predominates, but it does not breathe the purity of sentiment which marked the tragedies of Æschylus and Sophocles; it approaches rather to the tone of the modern drama. He paints the weakness and corruptions of society, and brings his subjects to the level of common life. He was the pet of the Sophists, and was pantheistic in his views. He does not attempt to show ideal excellence, and his characters represent men not as they ought to be, but as they are, especially in corrupt states of society.

Euripides wrote ninety-five plays, of which eighteen are extant. Whatever objection may be urged to his dramas on the score of morality, nobody can question their transcendent art or their great originality.

With the exception of Shakspeare, all succeeding dramatists have copied the three great Greek tragic poets whom we have just named, — especially Racine, who took Sophocles for his model, — even as the great epic poets of all ages have been indebted to Homer.

The Greeks were no less distinguished for comedy than for tragedy. Both tragedy and comedy sprang from feasts in honor of Bacchus; and as the jests and frolics were found misplaced when introduced into grave scenes, a separate province of the drama was formed, and comedy arose. At first it did not derogate from the religious purposes which were at the foundation of the Greek drama; it turned upon parodies in which the adventures of the gods were introduced by way of sport, — as in describing the appetite of Hercules or the cowardice of Bacchus. The comic authors entertained spectators by fantastic and gross displays, by the exhibition of buffoonery and pantomime. But the taste of the Athenians was too severe to relish such entertainments, and comedy passed into ridicule of public men and measures and the fashions of the day. The people loved to see their great men brought down to their own level. Comedy,

however, did not flourish until the morals of society were degenerated, and ridicule had become the most effective weapon wherewith to assail prevailing follies. In modern times, comedy reached its culminating point when society was both the most corrupt and the most intellectual, — as in France, when Molière pointed his envenomed shafts against popular vices. In Greece it flourished in the age of Socrates and the Sophists, when there was great bitterness in political parties and an irrepressible desire for novelties. Comedy first made itself felt as a great power in Cratinus, who espoused the side of Cimon against Pericles with great bitterness and vehemence.

Many were the comic writers of that age of wickedness and genius, but all yielded precedence to Aristophanes, of whose writings only his plays have reached us. Never were libels on persons of authority and influence uttered with such terrible license. He attacked the gods, the politicians, the philosophers, and the poets of Athens; even private citizens did not escape from his shafts, and women were the subjects of his irony. Socrates was made the butt of his ridicule when most revered, Cleon in the height of his power, and Euripides when he had gained the highest prizes. Aristophanes has furnished jests for Rabelais, hints to Swift, and humor for Molière. In satire, in derision, in invective, and

bitter scorn he has never been surpassed. No modern capital would tolerate such unbounded license; yet no plays in their day were ever more popular, or more fully exposed follies which could not otherwise be reached. Aristophanes is called the Father of Comedy, and his comedies are of great historical importance, although his descriptions are doubtless caricatures. He was patriotic in his intentions, even setting up as a reformer. His peculiar genius shines out in his "Clouds," the greatest of his pieces, in which he attacks the Sophists. He wrote fifty-four plays. He was born 444 B. C., and died 380 B. C.

Thus it would appear that in the three great departments of poetry, — the epic, the lyric, and the dramatic, — the old Greeks were great masters, and have been the teachers of all subsequent nations and ages.

The Romans in these departments were not the equals of the Greeks, but they were very successful copyists, and will bear comparison with modern nations. If the Romans did not produce a Homer, they can boast of a Virgil; if they had no Pindar, they furnished a Horace; and in satire they transcended the Greeks.

The Romans produced no poetry worthy of notice until the Greek language and literature were introduced among them. It was not till the fall of Tarentum that we read of a Roman poet. Livius Andronicus, a Greek

slave, 240 B. C., rudely translated the Odyssey into Latin, and was the author of various plays, all of which have perished, and none of which, according to Cicero, were worth a second perusal. Still, Andronicus was the first to substitute the Greek drama for the old lyrical stage poetry. One year after the first Punic War, he exhibited the first Roman play. As the creator of the drama he deserves historical notice, though he has no claim to originality, but, like a schoolmaster as he was, pedantically labored to imitate the culture of the Greeks. His plays formed the commencement of Roman translation-literature, and naturalized the Greek metres in Latium, even though they were curiosities rather than works of art.

Nævius, 235 B. C., produced a play at Rome, and wrote both epic and dramatic poetry, but so little has survived that no judgment can be formed of his merits. He was banished for his invectives against the aristocracy, who did not relish severity of comedy. Mommsen regards Nævius as the first of the Romans who deserves to be ranked among the poets. His language was free from stiffness and affectation, and his verses had a graceful flow. In metres he closely adhered to Andronicus.

Plautus was perhaps the first great dramatic poet whom the Romans produced, and his comedies are still admired by critics as both original and fresh. He was

born in Umbria, 257 B. C., and was contemporaneous with Publius and Cneius Scipio. He died 184 B. C. The first development of Roman genius in the field of poetry seems to have been the dramatic, in which still the Greek authors were copied. Plautus might be mistaken for a Greek, were it not for the painting of Roman manners, for his garb is essentially Greek. Plautus wrote one hundred and thirty plays, not always for the stage, but for the reading public. He lived about the time of the second Punic War, before the theatre was fairly established at Rome. His characters, although founded on Greek models, act, speak, and joke like Romans. He enjoyed great popularity down to the latest times of the empire, while the purity of his language, as well as the felicity of his wit, was celebrated by the ancient critics. Cicero places his wit on a par with the old Attic comedy; while Jerome spent much time in reading his comedies, even though they afterward cost him tears of bitter regret. Modern dramatists owe much to Plautus. Molière has imitated him in his "Avare," and Shakspeare in his "Comedy of Errors." Lessing pronounces the "Captivi" to be the finest comedy ever brought upon the stage; he translated this play into German, and it has also been admirably translated into English. The great excellence of Plautus was the masterly handling of language, and the adjusting the parts for dramatic effect.

His humor, broad and fresh, produced irresistible comic effects. No one ever surpassed him in his vocabulary of nicknames and his happy jokes. Hence he maintained his popularity in spite of his vulgarity.

Terence shares with Plautus the throne of Roman comedy. He was a Carthaginian slave, born 185 B. C., but was educated by a wealthy Roman into whose hands he fell, and ever after associated with the best society and travelled extensively in Greece. He was greatly inferior to Plautus in originality, and has not exerted a like lasting influence; but he wrote comedies characterized by great purity of diction, which have been translated into all modern languages. Terence, whom Mommsen regards as the most polished, elegant, and chaste of all the poets of the newer comedy, closely copied the Greek Menander. Unlike Plautus, he drew his characters from good society, and his comedies, if not moral, were decent. Plautus wrote for the multitude, Terence for the few; Plautus delighted in noisy dialogue and slang expressions; Terence confined himself to quiet conversation and elegant expressions, for which he was admired by Cicero and Quintilian and other great critics. He aspired to the approval of the cultivated, rather than the applause of the vulgar; and it is a remarkable fact that his comedies supplanted the more original productions of Plautus in the later years of the republic, showing

that the literature of the aristocracy was more prized than that of the people, even in a degenerate age.

The "Thyestes" of Varius was regarded in its day as equal to Greek tragedies. Ennius composed tragedies in a vigorous style, and was regarded by the Romans as the parent of their literature, although most of his works have perished. Virgil borrowed many of his thoughts, and was regarded as the prince of Roman song in the time of Cicero. The Latin language is greatly indebted to him. Pacuvius imitated Æschylus in the loftiness of his style. From the times before the Augustan age no tragic production has reached us, although Quintilian speaks highly of Accius, especially of the vigor of his style; but he merely imitated the Greeks. The only tragedy of the Romans which has reached us was written by Seneca the philosopher.

In epic poetry the Romans accomplished more, though even here they are still inferior to the Greeks. The Æneid of Virgil has certainly survived the material glories of Rome. It may not have come up to the exalted ideal of its author; it may be defaced by political flatteries; it may not have the force and originality of the Iliad, — but it is superior in art, and delineates the passion of love with more delicacy than can be found in any Greek author. In soundness of judgment, in tenderness of feeling, in chastened fancy, in picturesque description, in delineation of character,

in matchless beauty of diction, and in splendor of versification, it has never been surpassed by any poem in any language, and proudly takes its place among the imperishable works of genius. Henry Thompson, in his "History of Roman Literature," says: —

"Availing himself of the pride and superstition of the Roman people, the poet traces the origin and establishment of the 'Eternal City' to those heroes and actions which had enough in them of what was human and ordinary to excite the sympathies of his countrymen, intermingled with persons and circumstances of an extraordinary and superhuman character to awaken their admiration and awe. No subject could have been more happily chosen. It has been admired also for its perfect unity of action; for while the episodes command the richest variety of description, they are always subordinate to the main object of the poem, which is to impress the divine authority under which Æneas first settled in Italy. The wrath of Juno, upon which the whole fate of Æneas seems to turn, is at once that of a woman and a goddess; the passion of Dido and her general character bring us nearer to the present world, — but the poet is continually introducing higher and more effectual influences, until, by the intervention of gods and men, the Trojan name is to be continued in the Roman, and thus heaven and earth are appeased."

Probably no one work of man has had such a wide and profound influence as this poem of Virgil, — a text-

book in all schools since the revival of learning, the model of the Carlovingian poets, the guide of Dante, the oracle of Tasso. Virgil was born seventy years before Christ, and was seven years older than Augustus. His parentage was humble, but his facilities of education were great. He was a most fortunate man, enjoying the friendship of Augustus and Mæcenas, fame in his own lifetime, leisure to prosecute his studies, and ample rewards for his labors. He died at Brundusium at the age of fifty.

In lyrical poetry, the Romans can boast of one of the greatest masters of any age or nation. The Odes of Horace have never been transcended, and will probably remain through all ages the delight of scholars. They may not have the deep religious sentiment and unity of imagination and passion which belong to the Greek lyrical poets, but as works of art, of exquisite felicity of expression, of agreeable images, they are unrivalled. Even in the time of Juvenal his poems were the common school-books of Roman youth. Horace, born 65 B. C., like Virgil was also a favored man, enjoying the friendship of the great, and possessing ease, fame, and fortune; but his longings for retirement and his disgust at the frivolities around him are a sad commentary on satisfied desires. His Odes composed but a small part of his writings. His Epistles are the most perfect of his productions, and rank

with the "Georgics" of Virgil and the "Satires" of Juvenal as the most perfect form of Roman verse. His satires are also admirable, but without the fierce vehemence and lofty indignation that characterized those of Juvenal. It is the folly rather than the wickedness of vice which Horace describes with such playful skill and such keenness of observation. He was the first to mould the Latin tongue to the Greek lyric measures. Quintilian's criticism is indorsed by all scholars, — *Lyricorum Horatius fere solus legi dignus, in verbis felicissime audax.* No poetry was ever more severely elaborated than that of Horace, and the melody of the language imparts to it a peculiar fascination. If inferior to Pindar in passion and loftiness, it glows with a more genial humanity and with purer wit. It cannot be enjoyed fully except by those versed in the experiences of life, who perceive in it a calm wisdom, a penetrating sagacity, a sober enthusiasm, and a refined taste, which are unusual even among the masters of human thought.

It is the fashion to depreciate the original merits of this poet, as well as those of Virgil, Plautus, and Terence, because they derived so much assistance from the Greeks. But the Greeks also borrowed from one another. Pure originality is impossible. It is the mission of art to add to its stores, without hoping to monopolize the whole realm. Even Shakspeare, the most

original of modern poets, was vastly indebted to those who went before him, and he has not escaped the hypercriticism of minute observers.

In this mention of lyrical poetry I have not spoken of Catullus, unrivalled in tender lyric, the greatest poet before the Augustan era. He was born 87 B. C., and enjoyed the friendship of the most celebrated characters. One hundred and sixteen of his poems have come down to us, most of which are short, and many of them defiled by great coarseness and sensuality. Critics say, however, that whatever he touched he adorned; that his vigorous simplicity, pungent wit, startling invective, and felicity of expression make him one of the great poets of the Latin language.

In didactic poetry Lucretius was pre-eminent, and is regarded by Schlegel as the first of Roman poets in native genius. He was born 95 B. C., and died at the age of forty-two by his own hand. His principal poem "De Rerum Natura" is a delineation of the Epicurean philosophy, and treats of all the great subjects of thought with which his age was conversant. Somewhat resembling Pope's "Essay on Man" in style and subject, it is immeasurably superior in poetical genius. It is a lengthened disquisition, in seven thousand four hundred lines, upon the great phenomena of the outward world. As a painter and worshipper of Nature. Lucretius was superior to all the poets of antiquity.

His skill in presenting abstruse speculations is marvellous, and his outbursts of poetic genius are matchless in power and beauty. Into all subjects he casts a fearless eye, and writes with sustained enthusiasm. But he was not fully appreciated by his countrymen, although no other poet has so fully brought out the power of the Latin language. Professor Ramsay, while alluding to the melancholy tenderness of Tibullus, the exquisite ingenuity of Ovid, the inimitable felicity and taste of Horace, the gentleness and splendor of Virgil, and the vehement declamation of Juvenal, thinks that had the verse of Lucretius perished we should never have known that the Latin could give utterance to the grandest conceptions, with all that self-sustained majesty and harmonious swell in which the Grecian muse rolls forth her loftiest outpourings. The eulogium of Ovid is —

> "Carmina sublimis tunc sunt peritura Lucretî,
> Exitio terras quum dabit una dies."

Elegiac poetry has an honorable place in Roman literature. To this school belongs Ovid, born 43 B. C., died 18 A. D., whose "Tristia," a doleful description of the evils of exile, were much admired by the Romans. His most famous work was his "Metamorphoses," mythologic legends involving transformations, — a most poetical and imaginative production. He, with that self-conscious genius common to poets, declares that

his poem would be proof against sword, fire, thunder, and time, — a prediction, says Bayle, which has not yet proved false. Niebuhr thinks that Ovid next to Catullus was the most poetical of his countrymen. Milton thinks he might have surpassed Virgil, had he attempted epic poetry. He was nearest to the romantic school of all the classical authors; and Chaucer, Ariosto, and Spenser owe to him great obligations. Like Pope, his verses flowed spontaneously. His "Tristia" were more highly praised than his "Amores" or his "Metamorphoses," a fact which shows that contemporaries are not always the best judges of real merit. His poems, great as was their genius, are deficient in the severe taste which marked the Greeks, and are immoral in their tendency. He had great advantages, but was banished by Augustus for his description of licentious love. Nor did he support exile with dignity; he languished like Cicero when doomed to a similar fate, and died of a broken heart. But few intellectual men have ever been able to live at a distance from the scene of their glories, and without the stimulus of high society. Chrysostom is one of the few exceptions. Ovid, as an immoral writer, was justly punished.

Tibullus, also a famous elegiac poet, was born the same year as Ovid, and was the friend of the poet Horace. He lived in retirement, and was both gentle and amiable. At his beautiful country-seat he soothed

his soul with the charms of literature and the simple pleasures of the country. Niebuhr pronounces the elegies of Tibullus to be doleful, but Merivale thinks that "the tone of tender melancholy in which he sung his unprosperous loves had a deeper and purer source than the caprices of three inconstant paramours. . . . His spirit is eminently religious, though it bids him fold his hands in resignation rather than open them in hope. He alone of all the great poets of his day remained undazzled by the glitter of the Cæsarian usurpation, and pined away in unavailing despondency while beholding the subjugation of his country."

Propertius, the contemporary of Tibullus, born 51 B. C., was on the contrary the most eager of all the flatterers of Augustus, — a man of wit and pleasure, whose object of idolatry was Cynthia, a poetess and a courtesan. He was an imitator of the Greeks, but had a great contemporary fame. He showed much warmth of passion, but never soared into the sublime heights of poetry, like his rival.

Such were among the great elegiac poets of Rome, who were generally devoted to the delineation of the passion of love. The older English poets resembled them in this respect, but none of them have risen to such lofty heights as the later ones, — for instance, Wordsworth and Tennyson. It is in lyric poetry that the moderns have chiefly excelled the ancients,

in variety, in elevation of sentiment, and in imagination. The grandeur and originality of the ancients were displayed rather in epic and dramatic poetry.

In satire the Romans transcended both the Greeks and the moderns Satire arose with Lucilius, 148 B. C., in the time of Marius, an age when freedom of speech was tolerated. Horace was the first to gain immortality in this department. Next Persius comes, born 34 A. D., the friend of Lucian and Seneca in the time of Nero, who painted the vices of his age as it was passing to that degradation which marked the reign of Domitian, when Juvenal appeared. The latter, disdaining fear, boldly set forth the abominations of the times, and struck without distinction all who departed from duty and conscience. There is nothing in any language which equals the fire, the intensity, and the bitterness of Juvenal, not even the invectives of Swift and Pope. But he flourished during the decline of literature, and had neither the taste nor the elegance of the Augustan writers. He was born 60 A. D., the son of a freedman, and was the contemporary of Martial. He was banished by Domitian on account of a lampoon against a favorite dancer, but under the reign of Nerva he returned to Rome, and the imperial tyranny was the subject of his bitterest denunciation next to the degradation of public morals. His great rival in satire was Horace, who laughed at follies; but Juvenal, more aus-

tere, exaggerated and denounced them. His sarcasms on women have never been equalled in severity, and we cannot but hope that they were unjust. From an historical point of view, as a delineation of the manners of his age, his satires are priceless, even like the epigrams of Martial. This uncompromising poet, not pliant and easy like Horace, animadverted like an incorruptible censor on the vices which were undermining the moral health and preparing the way for violence; on the hypocrisy of philosophers and the cruelty of tyrants; on the frivolity of women and the debauchery of men. He discoursed on the vanity of human wishes with the moral wisdom of Dr. Johnson, and urged self-improvement like Socrates and Epictetus.

I might speak of other celebrated poets, — of Lucan, of Martial, of Petronius; but I only wish to show that the great poets of antiquity, both Greek and Roman, have never been surpassed in genius, in taste, and in art, and that few were ever more honored in their lifetime by appreciating admirers, — showing the advanced state of civilization which was reached in those classic countries in everything pertaining to the realm of thought and art.

The genius of the ancients was displayed in prose composition as well as in poetry, although perfection

was not so soon attained. The poets were the great creators of the languages of antiquity. It was not until they had produced their immortal works that the languages were sufficiently softened and refined to admit of great beauty in prose. But prose requires art as well as poetry. There is an artistic rhythm in the writings of the classical authors — like those of Cicero, Herodotus, and Thucydides — as marked as in the beautiful measure of Homer and Virgil. Plato did not write poetry, but his prose is as "musical as Apollo's lyre." Burke and Macaulay are as great artists in style as Tennyson himself. And it is seldom that men, either in ancient or modern times, have been distinguished for both kinds of composition, although Voltaire, Schiller, Milton, Swift, and Scott are among the exceptions. Cicero, the greatest prose writer of antiquity, produced in poetry only a single inferior work, which was laughed at by his contemporaries. Bacon, with all his affluence of thought, vigor of imagination, and command of language, could not write poetry any easier than Pope could write prose, — although it is asserted by some modern writers, of no great reputation, that Bacon wrote Shakspeare's plays.

All sorts of prose compositions were carried to perfection by both Greeks and Romans, in history, in criticism, in philosophy, in oratory, in epistles.

The earliest great prose writer among the Greeks was Herodotus, 484 B. C., from which we may infer that History was the first form of prose composition to attain development. But Herodotus was not born until Æschylus had gained a prize for tragedy, nor for more than two hundred years after Simonides the lyric poet flourished, and probably five or six hundred years after Homer sang his immortal epics; yet though two thousand years and more have passed since he wrote, the style of this great "Father of History" is admired by every critic, while his history as a work of art is still a study and a marvel. It is difficult to understand why no work in prose anterior to Herodotus is worthy of note, since the Greeks had attained a high civilization two hundred years before he appeared, and the language had reached a high point of development under Homer for more than five hundred years. The History of Herodotus was probably written in the decline of life, when his mind was enriched with great attainments in all the varied learning of his age, and when he had conversed with most of the celebrated men of the various countries he had visited. It pertains chiefly to the wars of the Greeks with the Persians; but in his frequent episodes, which do not impair the unity of the work, he is led to speak of the manners and customs of the Oriental nations. It was once the fashion to speak of

Herodotus as a credulous man, who embodied the most improbable though interesting stories. But now it is believed that no historian was ever more profound, conscientious, and careful; and all modern investigations confirm his sagacity and impartiality. He was one of the most accomplished men of antiquity, or of any age, — an enlightened and curious traveller, a profound thinker; a man of universal knowledge, familiar with the whole range of literature, art, and science in his day; acquainted with all the great men of Greece and at the courts of Asiatic princes; the friend of Sophocles, of Pericles, of Thucydides, of Aspasia, of Socrates, of Damon, of Zeno, of Phidias, of Protagoras, of Euripides, of Polygnotus, of Anaxagoras, of Xenophon, of Alcibiades, of Lysias, of Aristophanes, — the most brilliant constellation of men of genius who were ever found together within the walls of a Grecian city, — respected and admired by these great lights, all of whom were inferior to him in knowledge. Thus was he fitted for his task by travel, by study, and by intercourse with the great, to say nothing of his original genius. The greatest prose work which had yet appeared in Greece was produced by Herodotus, — a prose epic, severe in taste, perfect in unity, rich in moral wisdom, charming in style, religious in spirit, grand in subject, without a coarse passage; simple, unaffected, and beautiful, like the narratives

of the Bible, amusing yet instructive, easy to understand, yet extending to the utmost boundaries of human research, — a model for all subsequent historians. So highly was this historic composition valued by the Athenians when their city was at the height of its splendor that they decreed to its author ten talents (about twelve thousand dollars) for reciting it. He even went from city to city, a sort of prose rhapsodist, or like a modern lecturer, reciting his history, — an honored and extraordinary man, a sort of Humboldt, having mastered everything. And he wrote, not for fame, but to communicate the results of inquiries made to satisfy his craving for knowledge, which he obtained by personal investigation at Dodona, at Delphi, at Samos, at Athens, at Corinth, at Thebes, at Tyre; he even travelled into Egypt, Scythia, Asia Minor, Palestine, Babylonia, Italy, and the islands of the sea. His episode on Egypt is worth more, from an historical point of view, than all things combined which have descended to us from antiquity. Herodotus was the first to give dignity to history; nor in truthfulness, candor, and impartiality has he ever been surpassed. His very simplicity of style is a proof of his transcendent art, even as it is the evidence of his severity of taste. The translation of this great history by Rawlinson, with notes, is invaluable.

To Thucydides, as an historian, the modern world

also assigns a proud pre-eminence. He was born 471 B. C., and lived twenty years in exile on account of a military failure. He treated only of a short period, during the Peloponnesian War; but the various facts connected with that great event could be known only by the most minute and careful inquiries. He devoted twenty-seven years to the composition of his narrative, and weighed his evidence with the most scrupulous care. His style has not the fascination of Herodotus, but it is more concise. In a single volume Thucydides relates what could scarcely be compressed into eight volumes of a modern history. As a work of art, of its kind it is unrivalled. In his description of the plague of Athens this writer is as minute as he is simple. He abounds with rich moral reflections, and has a keen perception of human character. His pictures are striking and tragic. He is vigorous and intense, and every word he uses has a meaning, but some of his sentences are not always easily understood. One of the greatest tributes which can be paid to him is the estimate of an able critic, George Long, that we have a more exact history of a protracted and eventful period by Thucydides than we have of any period in modern history equally extended and eventful; and all this is compressed into a volume.

Xenophon is the last of the trio of the Greek historians whose writings are classic and inimitable. He

was born probably about 444 B. C. He is characterized by great simplicity and absence of affectation. His "Anabasis," in which he describes the expedition of the younger Cyrus and the retreat of the ten thousand Greeks, is his most famous book. But his "Cyropædia," in which the history of Cyrus is the subject, although still used as a classic in colleges for the beauty of its style, has no value as a history, since the author merely adopted the current stories of his hero without sufficient investigation. Xenophon wrote a variety of treatises and dialogues, but his "Memorabilia" of Socrates is the most valuable. All antiquity and all modern writers unite in ascribing to Xenophon great merit as a writer and great moral elevation as a man.

If we pass from the Greek to the Latin historians, — to those who were as famous as the Greek, and whose merit has scarcely been transcended in our modern times, if indeed it has been equalled, — the great names of Sallust, of Cæsar, of Livy, of Tacitus rise up before us, together with a host of other names we have not room or disposition to present, since we only aim to show that the ancients were at least our equals in this great department of prose composition. The first great masters of the Greek language in prose were the historians, so far as we can judge by the writings that have descended to us, although it is probable that the

orators may have shaped the language before them, and given it flexibility and refinement The first great prose writers of Rome were the orators; nor was the Latin language fully developed and polished until Cicero appeared. But we do not here write a history of the language; we speak only of those who wrote immortal works in the various departments of learning.

As Herodotus did not arise until the Greek language had been already formed by the poets, so no great prose writer appeared among the Romans for a considerable time after Plautus, Terence, Ennius, and Lucretius flourished. The first great historian was Sallust, the contemporary of Cicero, born 86 B. C., the year that Marius died. Q. Fabius Pictor, M. Portius Cato, and L. Cal. Piso had already written works which are mentioned with respect by Latin authors, but they were mere annalists or antiquarians, like the chroniclers of the Middle Ages, and had no claim as artists. Sallust made Thucydides his model, but fell below him in genius and elevated sentiment. He was born a plebeian, and rose to distinction by his talents, but was ejected from the senate for his profligacy. Afterward he made a great fortune as prætor and governor of Numidia, and lived in magnificence on the Quirinal, — one of the most profligate of the literary men of antiquity. We possess but a small portion of his works, but the fragments which have come down to us show

peculiar merit. He sought to penetrate the human heart, and to reveal the secret motives which actuate the conduct of men. The style of Sallust is brilliant, but his art is always apparent; he is clear and lively, but rhetorical. Like Voltaire, who inaugurated modern history, Sallust thought more of style than of accuracy as to facts. He was a party man, and never soared beyond his party. He aped the moralist, but exalted egoism and love of pleasure into proper springs of action, and honored talent disconnected with virtue. Like Carlyle, Sallust exalted *strong* men, and *because* they were strong. He was not comprehensive like Cicero, or philosophical like Thucydides, although he affected philosophy as he did morality. He was the first who deviated from the strict narratives of events, and also introduced much rhetorical declamation, which he puts into the mouths of his heroes. He wrote for *éclat.*

Julius Cæsar, born 100 or 102 B. C., as an historian ranks higher than Sallust, and no Roman ever wrote purer Latin. Yet his historical works, however great their merit, but feebly represent the transcendent genius of the most august name of antiquity. He was mathematician, architect, poet, philologist, orator, jurist, general, statesman, and imperator. In eloquence he was second only to Cicero. The great value of Cæsar's history is in the sketches of the productions,

the manners, the customs, and the political conditions of Gaul, Britain, and Germany. His observations on military science, on the operation of sieges and the construction of bridges and military engines are valuable; but the description of his military career is only a studied apology for his crimes, — even as the bulletins of Napoleon were set forth to show his victories in the most favorable light. Cæsar's fame rests on his victories and successes as a statesman rather than on his merits as an historian, — even as Louis Napoleon will live in history for his deeds rather than as the apologist of his great usurping prototype. Cæsar's "Commentaries" resemble the history of Herodotus more than any other Latin production, at least in style; they are simple and unaffected, precise and elegant, plain and without pretension.

The Augustan age which followed, though it produced a constellation of poets who shed glory upon the throne before which they prostrated themselves in abject homage, like the courtiers of Louis XIV., still was unfavorable to prose composition, — to history as well as eloquence. Of the historians of that age, Livy, born 59 B. C., is the only one whose writings are known to us, in the shape of some fragments of his history. He was a man of distinction at court, and had a great literary reputation, — so great that a Spaniard travelled from Cadiz on purpose to see

him. Most of the great historians of the world have occupied places of honor and rank, which were given to them not as prizes for literary successes, but for the experience, knowledge, and culture which high social position and ample means secure. Herodotus lived in courts; Thucydides was a great general, as also was Xenophon; Cæsar was the first man of his times; Sallust was prætor and governor; Livy was tutor to Claudius; Tacitus was prætor and consul; Eusebius was bishop and favorite of Constantine; Ammianus was the friend of the Emperor Julian; Gregory of Tours was one of the leading prelates of the West; Froissart attended in person, as a man of rank, the military expeditions of his day; Clarendon was Lord Chancellor; Burnet was a bishop and favorite of William III.; Thiers and Guizot both were prime ministers; while Gibbon, Hume, Robertson, Macaulay, Grote, Milman, Froude, Neander, Niebuhr, Müller, Dahlman, Buckle, Prescott, Irving, Bancroft, Motley, have all been men of wealth or position. Nor do I remember a single illustrious historian who has been poor and neglected.

The ancients regarded Livy as the greatest of historians, — an opinion not indorsed by modern critics, on account of his inaccuracies. But his narrative is always interesting, and his language pure. He did not sift evidence like Grote, nor generalize like Gibbon:

but like Voltaire and Macaulay, he was an artist in style, and possessed undoubted genius. His Annals are comprised in one hundred and forty-two books, extending from the foundation of the city to the death of Drusus, 9 B.C., of which only thirty-five have come down to us, — an impressive commentary on the vandalism of the Middle Ages and the ignorance of the monks who could not preserve so great a treasure. "His story flows in a calm, clear, sparkling current, with every charm which simplicity and ease can give." He delineates character with great clearness and power; his speeches are noble rhetorical compositions; his sentences are rhythmical cadences. Livy was not a critical historian like Herodotus, for he took his materials second-hand, and was ignorant of geography, nor did he write with the exalted ideal of Thucydides; but as a painter of beautiful forms, which only a rich imagination could conjure, he is unrivalled in the history of literature. Moreover, he was honest and sound in heart, and was just and impartial in reference to those facts with which he was conversant.

In the estimation of modern critics the highest rank as an historian is assigned to Tacitus, and it would indeed be difficult to find his superior in any age or country. He was born 57 A.D., about forty-three years after the death of Augustus. He belonged to the equestrian rank, and was a man of consular dignity.

He had every facility for literary labors that leisure, wealth, friends, and social position could give, and lived under a reign when truth might be told. The extant works of this great writer are the "Life of Agricola," his father-in-law; his "Annales," which begin with the death of Augustus, 14 A. D., and close with the death of Nero, 68 A. D.; the "Historiæ," which comprise the period from the second consulate of Galba, 68 A. D., to the death of Domitian; and a treatise on the Germans. His histories describe Rome in the fulness of imperial glory, when the will of one man was the supreme law of the empire. He also wrote of events that occurred when liberty had fled, and the yoke of despotism was nearly insupportable. He describes a period of great moral degradation, nor does he hesitate to lift the veil of hypocrisy in which his generation had wrapped itself. He fearlessly exposes the cruelties and iniquities of the early emperors, and writes with judicial impartiality respecting all the great characters he describes. No ancient writer shows greater moral dignity and integrity of purpose than Tacitus. In point of artistic unity he is superior to Livy and equal to Thucydides, whom he resembles in conciseness of style. His distinguishing excellence as an historian is his sagacity and impartiality. Nothing escapes his penetrating eye; and he inflicts merited chastisement on

the tyrants who revelled in the prostrated liberties of his country, while he immortalizes those few who were faithful to duty and conscience in a degenerate age. But the writings of Tacitus were not so popular as those of Livy, since neither princes nor people relished his intellectual independence and moral elevation. He does not satisfy Dr. Arnold, who thinks he ought to have been better versed in the history of the Jews, and who dislikes his speeches because they were fictitious.

Neither the Latin nor Greek historians are admired by those dry critics who seek to give to rare antiquarian matter a disproportionate importance, and to make this matter as fixed and certain as the truths of natural science. History can never be other than an approximation to the truth, even when it relates to the events and characters of its own age. History does not give positive, indisputable knowledge. We know that Cæsar was ambitious; but we do not know whether he was more or less so than Pompey, nor do we know how far he was justified in his usurpation. A great history must have other merits besides accuracy, antiquarian research, and presentation of authorities and notes. It must be a work of art; and art has reference to style and language, to grouping of details and richness of illustration, to eloquence and poetry and beauty. A dry history, however learned, will never

be read; it will only be consulted, like a law-book, or Mosheim's "Commentaries." We require *life* in history, and it is for their vividness that the writings of Livy and Tacitus will be perpetuated. Voltaire and Schiller have no great merit as historians in a technical sense, but the "Life of Charles XII." and the "Thirty Years' War" are still classics. Neander has written one of the most searching and recondite histories of modern times; but it is too dry, too deficient in art, to be cherished, and may pass away like the voluminous writings of Varro, the most learned of the Romans. It is the *art* which is immortal in a book, — not the knowledge, nor even the thoughts. What keeps alive the "Provincial Letters" of Pascal? It is the style, the irony, the elegance that characterize them. The exquisite delineation of character, the moral wisdom, the purity and force of language, the artistic arrangement, and the lively and interesting narrative appealing to all minds, like the "Arabian Nights" or Froissart's "Chronicles," are the elements which give immortality to the classic authors. We will not let them perish, because they amuse and interest and inspire us.

A remarkable example is that of Plutarch, who, although born a Greek and writing in the Greek language, was a contemporary of Tacitus, lived long in Rome, and was one of the "immortals" of the imperial age. A teacher of philosophy during his early man-

hood, he spent his last years as archon and priest of Apollo in his native town. His most famous work is his "Parallel Lives" of forty-six historic Greeks and Romans, arranged in pairs, depicted with marvellous art and all the fascination of anecdote and social wit, while presenting such clear conceptions of characters and careers, and the whole so restrained within the bounds of good taste and harmonious proportion, as to have been even to this day regarded as forming a model for the ideal biography.

But it is taking a narrow view of history to make all writers after the same pattern, even as it would be bigoted to make all Christians belong to the same sect. Some will be remarkable for style, others for learning, and others again for moral and philosophical wisdom; some will be minute, and others generalizing; some will dig out a multiplicity of facts without apparent object, and others induce from those facts; some will make essays, and others chronicles. We have need of all styles and all kinds of excellence. A great and original thinker may not have the time or opportunity or taste for a minute and searching criticism of original authorities; but he may be able to generalize previously established facts so as to draw most valuable moral instruction from them for the benefit of his readers. History is a boundless field of inquiry; no man can master it in all its departments

and periods. It will not do to lay great emphasis on minute details, and neglect the art of generalization. If an historian attempts to embody too much learning, he is likely to be deficient in originality; if he would say everything, he is apt to be dry; if he elaborates too much, he loses animation. Moreover, different classes of readers require different kinds and styles of histories; there must be histories for students, histories for old men, histories for young men, histories to amuse, and histories to instruct. If all men were to write history according to Dr. Arnold's views, we should have histories of interest only to classical scholars. The ancient historians never quoted their sources of knowledge, but were valued for their richness of thoughts and artistic beauty of style. The ages in which they flourished attached no value to pedantic displays of learning paraded in foot-notes.

Thus the great historians whom I have mentioned, both Greek and Latin, have few equals and no superiors in our own times in those things that are most to be admired. They were not pedants, but men of immense genius and genuine learning, who blended the profoundest principles of moral wisdom with the most fascinating narrative,—men universally popular among learned and unlearned, great artists in style, and masters of the language in which they wrote.

Rome can boast of no great historian after Tacitus,

who should have belonged to the Ciceronian epoch. Suetonius, born about the year 70 A. D., shortly after Nero's death, was rather a biographer than an historian; nor as a biographer does he take a high rank. His "Lives of the Cæsars," like Diogenes Laertius's "Lives of the Philosophers," are rather anecdotical than historical. L. Anneus Florus, who flourished during the reign of Trajan, has left a series of sketches of the different wars from the days of Romulus to those of Augustus. Frontinus epitomized the large histories of Pompeius. Ammianus Marcellinus wrote a history from Nerva to Valens, and is often quoted by Gibbon. But none wrote who should be adduced as examples of the triumph of genius, except Sallust, Cæsar, Livy, Plutarch, and Tacitus.

There is another field of prose composition in which the Greeks and Romans gained great distinction, and proved themselves equal to any nation of modern times, — that of eloquence. It is true, we have not a rich collection of ancient speeches; but we have every reason to believe that both Greeks and Romans were most severely trained in the art of public speaking, and that forensic eloquence was highly prized and munificently rewarded. It began with democratic institutions, and flourished as long as the People were a great power in the State; it declined when-

ever and wherever tyrants bore rule. Eloquence and liberty flourish together; nor can there be eloquence where there is not freedom of debate. In the fifth century before Christ — the first century of democracy — great orators arose, for without the power and the opportunity of defending himself against accusation no man could hold an ascendent position. Socrates insisted upon the gift of oratory for a general in the army as well as for a leader in political life. In Athens the courts of justice were numerous, and those who could not defend themselves were obliged to secure the services of those who were trained in the use of public speaking. Thus arose the lawyers, among whom eloquence was more in demand and more richly paid than in any other class. Rhetoric became connected with dialectics, and in Greece, Sicily, and Italy both were extensively cultivated. Empedocles was distinguished as much for rhetoric as for philosophy. It was not, however, in the courts of law that eloquence displayed the greatest fire and passion, but in political assemblies. These could only coexist with liberty; for a democracy is more favorable than an aristocracy to large assemblies of citizens. In the Grecian republics eloquence as an art may be said to have been born. It was nursed and fed by political agitation, by the strife of parties. It arose from appeals to the people as a source of power:

when the people were not cultivated, it addressed chiefly popular passions and prejudices; when they were enlightened, it addressed interests.

It was in Athens, where there existed the purest form of democratic institutions, that eloquence rose to the loftiest heights in the ancient world, so far as eloquence appeals to popular passions. Pericles, the greatest statesman of Greece, 495 B. C., was celebrated for his eloquence, although no specimens remain to us. It was conceded by the ancient authors that his oratory was of the highest kind, and the epithet of "Olympian" was given him, as carrying the weapons of Zeus upon his tongue. His voice was sweet, and his utterance distinct and rapid. Peisistratus was also famous for his eloquence, although he was a usurper and a tyrant. Isocrates, 436 B. C., was a professed rhetorician, and endeavored to base his art upon sound moral principles, and rescue it from the influence of the Sophists. He was the great teacher of the most eminent statesmen of his day. Twenty-one of his orations have come down to us, and they are excessively polished and elaborated; but they were written to be read, they were not extemporary. His language is the purest and most refined Attic dialect. Lysias, 458 B. C., was a fertile writer of orations also, and he is reputed to have produced as many as four hundred and twenty-five; of these only thirty-five are extant.

From the statue in the Vatican, Rome

DEMOSTHENES

They are characterized by peculiar gracefulness and elegance, which did not interfere with strength. So able were these orations that only two were unsuccessful. They were so pure that they were regarded as the best canon of the Attic idiom.

But all the orators of Greece — and Greece was the land of orators — gave way to Demosthenes, born 385 B. C. He received a good education, and is said to have been instructed in philosophy by Plato and in eloquence by Isocrates; but it is more probable that he privately prepared himself for his brilliant career. As soon as he attained his majority, he brought suits against the men whom his father had appointed his guardians, for their waste of property, and after two years was successful, conducting the prosecution himself. It was not until the age of thirty that he appeared as a speaker in the public assembly on political matters, where he rapidly attained universal respect, and became one of the leading statesmen of Athens. Henceforth he took an active part in every question that concerned the State. He especially distinguished himself in his speeches against Macedonian aggrandizements, and his Philippics are perhaps the most brilliant of his orations. But the cause which he advocated was unfortunate; the battle of Cheronæa, 338 B. C., put an end to the independence of Greece, and Philip of Macedon was all-powerful. For this catastrophe Demos-

thenes was somewhat responsible, but as his motives were conceded to be pure and his patriotism lofty, he retained the confidence of his countrymen. Accused by Æschines, he delivered his famous Oration on the Crown. Afterward, during the supremacy of Alexander, Demosthenes was again accused, and suffered exile. Recalled from exile on the death of Alexander, he roused himself for the deliverance of Greece, without success; and hunted by his enemies he took poison in the sixty-third year of his age, having vainly contended for the freedom of his country, — one of the noblest spirits of antiquity, and lofty in his private life.

As an orator Demosthenes has not probably been equalled by any man of any country. By his contemporaries he was regarded as faultless in this respect; and when it is remembered that he struggled against physical difficulties which in the early part of his career would have utterly discouraged any ordinary man, we feel that he deserves the highest commendation. He never spoke without preparation, and most of his orations were severely elaborated. He never trusted to the impulse of the occasion; he did not believe in extemporary eloquence any more than Daniel Webster, who said there is no such thing. All the orations of Demosthenes exhibit him as a pure and noble patriot, and are full of the loftiest

sentiments. He was a great artist, and his oratorical successes were greatly owing to the arrangement of his speeches and the application of the strongest arguments in their proper places. Added to this moral and intellectual superiority was the "magic power of his language, majestic and simple at the same time, rich yet not bombastic, strange and yet familiar, solemn and not too ornate, grave and yet pleasing, concise and yet fluent, sweet and yet impressive, which altogether carried away the minds of his hearers." His orations were most highly prized by the ancients, who wrote innumerable commentaries on them, most of which are lost. Sixty of the great productions of his genius have come down to us.

Demosthenes, like other orators, first became known as the composer of speeches for litigants; but his fame was based on the orations he pronounced in great political emergencies. His rival was Æschines, who was vastly inferior to Demosthenes, although bold, vigorous, and brilliant. Indeed, the opinions of mankind for two thousand years have been unanimous in ascribing to Demosthenes the highest position as an orator among all the men of ancient and modern times. David Hume says of him that "could his manner be copied, its success would be infallible over a modern audience." Says Lord Brougham, "It is rapid harmony exactly adjusted to the sense. It is vehement reasoning,

without any appearance of art. It is disdain, anger, boldness, freedom involved in a continual stream of argument; so that of all human productions his orations present to us the models which approach the nearest to perfection."

It is probable that the Romans were behind the Athenians in all the arts of rhetoric; yet in the days of the republic celebrated orators arose among the lawyers and politicians. It was in forensic eloquence that Latin prose first appeared as a cultivated language; for the forum was to the Romans what libraries are to us. The art of public speaking in Rome was early developed. Cato, Lælius, Carbo, and the Gracchi are said to have been majestic and harmonious in speech, yet excelled by Antonius, Crassus, Cotta, Sulpitius, and Hortensius. The last had a very brilliant career as an orator, though his orations were too florid to be read. Cæsar was also distinguished for his eloquence, its characteristics being force and purity. "Cœlius was noted for lofty sentiment, Brutus for philosophical wisdom, Calidius for a delicate and harmonious style, and Calvus for sententious force."

But all the Roman orators yielded to Cicero, as the Greeks did to Demosthenes. These two men are always coupled together when allusion is made to eloquence. They were pre-eminent in the ancient world, and have never been equalled in the modern.

Cicero, 106 B. C., was probably not equal to his great Grecian rival in vehemence, in force, in fiery argument which swept everything away before him, nor generally in original genius; but he was his superior in learning, in culture, and in breadth. Cicero distinguished himself very early as an advocate, but his first great public effort was made in the prosecution of Verres for corruption. Although Verres was defended by Hortensius and backed by the whole influence of the Metelli and other powerful families, Cicero gained his cause, — more fortunate than Burke in his prosecution of Warren Hastings, who also was sustained by powerful interests and families. The speech on the Manilian Law, when Cicero appeared as a political orator, greatly contributed to his popularity. I need not describe his memorable career, — his successive elections to all the highest offices of state, his detection of Catiline's conspiracy, his opposition to turbulent and ambitious partisans, his alienations and friendships, his brilliant career as a statesman, his misfortunes and sorrows, his exile and recall, his splendid services to the State, his greatness and his defects, his virtues and weaknesses, his triumphs and martyrdom. These are foreign to my purpose. No man of heathen antiquity is better known to us, and no man by pure genius ever won more glorious laurels. His life and labors are immortal. His virtues and services are embalmed in the

heart of the world. Few men ever performed greater literary labors, and in so many of its departments. Next to Aristotle and Varro, Cicero was the most learned man of antiquity, but performed more varied labors than either, since he was not only great as a writer and speaker, but also as a statesman, being the most conspicuous man in Rome after Pompey and Cæsar. He may not have had the moral greatness of Socrates, nor the philosophical genius of Plato, nor the overpowering eloquence of Demosthenes, but he was a master of all the wisdom of antiquity. Even civil law, the great science of the Romans, became interesting in his hands, and was divested of its dryness and technicality. He popularized history, and paid honor to all art, even to the stage; he made the Romans conversant with the philosophy of Greece, and systematized the various speculations. He may not have added to philosophy, but no Roman after him understood so well the practical bearing of all its various systems. His glory is purely intellectual, and it was by sheer genius that he rose to his exalted position and influence.

But it was in forensic eloquence that Cicero was pre-eminent, in which he had but one equal in ancient times. Roman eloquence culminated in him. He composed about eighty orations, of which fifty-nine are preserved. Some were delivered from the rostrum

to the people, and some in the senate; some were mere philippics, as severe in denunciation as those of Demosthenes; some were laudatory; some were judicial; but all were severely logical, full of historical allusion, profound in philosophical wisdom, and pervaded with the spirit of patriotism. Francis W. Newman, in his "Regal Rome," thus describes Cicero's eloquence: —

"He goes round and round his object, surveys it in every light, examines it in all its parts, retires and then advances, compares and contrasts it, illustrates, confirms, and enforces it, till the hearer feels ashamed of doubting a position which seems built on a foundation so strictly argumentative. And having established his case, he opens upon his opponent a discharge of raillery so delicate and good-natured that it is impossible for the latter to maintain his ground against it; or, when the subject is too grave, he colors his exaggerations with all the bitterness of irony and vehemence of passion."

Critics have uniformly admired Cicero's style as peculiarly suited to the Latin language, which, being scanty and unmusical, requires more redundancy than the Greek. The simplicity of the Attic writers would make Latin composition bald and tame. To be perspicuous, the Latin must be full. Thus Arnold thinks that what Tacitus gained in energy he lost in elegance and perspicuity. But Cicero, dealing with a barren and unphilosophical language, enriched it with circum-

locutions and metaphors, while he freed it of harsh and uncouth expressions, and thus became the greatest master of composition the world has seen. He was a great artist, making use of his scanty materials to the best effect; he had absolute control over the resources of his vernacular tongue, and not only unrivalled skill in composition, but tact and judgment. Thus he was generally successful, in spite of the venality and corruption of the times. The courts of justice were the scenes of his earliest triumphs; nor until he was prætor did he speak from the rostrum on mere political questions, as in reference to the Manilian and Agrarian laws. It is in his political discourses that Cicero rises to the highest ranks. In his speeches against Verres, Catiline, and Antony he kindles in his countrymen lofty feelings for the honor of his country, and abhorrence of tyranny and corruption. Indeed, he hated bloodshed, injustice, and strife, and beheld the downfall of liberty with indescribable sorrow.

Thus in oratory as in history the ancients can boast of most illustrious examples, never even equalled. Still, we cannot tell the comparative merits of the great classical orators of antiquity with the more distinguished of our times; indeed only Mirabeau, Pitt, Fox, Burke, Brougham, Webster, and Clay can even be compared with them. In power of moving the people, some of our modern reformers and agitators

may be mentioned favorably; but their harangues are comparatively tame when read.

In philosophy the Greeks and Romans distinguished themselves more even than in poetry, or history, or eloquence. Their speculations pertained to the loftiest subjects that ever tasked the intellect of man. But this great department has already been presented. There were respectable writers in various other departments of literature, but no very great names whose writings have descended to us. Contemporaries had an exalted opinion of Varro, who was considered the most learned of the Romans, as well as their most voluminous author. He was born ten years before Cicero, and is highly commended by Augustine. He was entirely devoted to literature, took no interest in passing events, and lived to a good old age. Saint Augustine says of him that "he wrote so much that one wonders how he had time to read; and he read so much, we are astonished how he found time to write." He composed four hundred and ninety books. Of these only one has descended to us entire, — "De Re Rustica," written at the age of eighty; but it is the best treatise which has come down from antiquity on ancient agriculture. We have parts of his other books, and we know of still others that have entirely perished which for their information would be invaluable, especially his "Divine Antiquities," in sixteen

books, — his great work, from which Saint Augustine drew materials for his "City of God." Varro wrote treatises on language, on the poets, on philosophy, on geography, and on various other subjects; he also wrote satire and criticism. But although his writings were learned, his style was so bad that the ages have failed to preserve him. The truly immortal books are most valued for their artistic excellences. No man, however great his genius, can afford to be dull. Style is to written composition what delivery is to a public speaker. The multitude do not go to hear the man of thoughts, but to hear the man of words, being repelled or attracted by *manner*.

Seneca was another great writer among the Romans, but he belongs to the domain of philosophy, although it is his ethical works which have given him immortality, — as may be truly said of Socrates and Epictetus, although they are usually classed among the philosophers. Seneca was a Spaniard, born but a few years before the Christian era; he was a lawyer and a rhetorician, also a teacher and minister of Nero. It was his misfortune to know one of the most detestable princes that ever scandalized humanity, and it is not to his credit to have accumulated in four years one of the largest fortunes in Rome while serving such a master; but since he lived to experience Nero's ingratitude, Seneca is more commonly regarded as a

martyr. Had he lived in the republican period, he would have been a great orator. He wrote voluminously, on many subjects, and was devoted to a literary life. He rejected the superstitions of his country, and looked upon the ritualism of religion as a mere fashion. In his own belief he was a deist; but though he wrote fine ethical treatises, he dishonored his own virtues by a compliance with the vices of others. He saw much of life, and died at fifty-three. What is remarkable in Seneca's writings, which are clear but labored, is that under Pagan influences and imperial tyranny he should have presented such lofty moral truth; and it is a mark of almost transcendent talent that he should, unaided by Christianity, have soared so high in the realm of ethical inquiry. Nor is it easy to find any modern author who has treated great questions in so attractive a way.

Quintilian is a Latin classic, and belongs to the class of rhetoricians. He should have been mentioned among the orators, yet, like Lysias the Greek, Quintilian was a teacher of eloquence rather than an orator. He was born 40 A. D., and taught the younger Pliny, also two nephews of Domitian, receiving a regular salary from the imperial treasury. His great work is a complete system of rhetoric. "Institutiones Oratoriæ" is one of the clearest and fullest of all rhetorical manuals ever written in any

language, although, as a literary production, it is inferior to the "De Oratore" of Cicero. It is very practical and sensible, and a complete compendium of every topic likely to be useful in the education of an aspirant for the honors of eloquence. In systematic arrangement it falls short of a similar work by Aristotle; but it is celebrated for its sound judgment and keen discrimination, showing great reading and reflection. Quintilian should be viewed as a critic rather than as a rhetorician, since he entered into the merits and defects of the great masters of Greek and Roman literature. In his peculiar province he has had no superior. Like Cicero or Demosthenes or Plato or Thucydides or Tacitus, Quintilian would be a great man if he lived in our times, and could proudly challenge the modern world to produce a better teacher than he in the art of public speaking.

There were other classical writers of immense fame, but they do not represent any particular class in the field of literature which can be compared with the modern. I can only draw attention to Lucian, — a witty and voluminous Greek author, who lived in the reign of Commodus, and who wrote rhetorical, critical, and biographical works, and even romances which have given hints to modern authors. His fame rests on his "Dialogues," intended to ridicule the heathen philosophy and religion, and which show him to have been

one of the great masters of ancient satire and mockery. His style of dialogue — a combination of Plato and Aristophanes — is not much used by modern writers, and his peculiar kind of ridicule is reserved now for the stage. Yet he cannot be called a writer of comedy, like Molière. He resembles Rabelais and Swift more than any other modern writers, having their indignant wit, indecent jokes, and pungent sarcasms. Like Juvenal, Lucian paints the vices and follies of his time, and exposes the hypocrisy that reigns in the high places of fashion and power. His dialogues have been imitated by Fontanelle and Lord Lyttleton, but these authors do not possess his humor or pungency. Lucian does not grapple with great truths, but contents himself with ridiculing those who have proclaimed them, and in his cold cynicism depreciates human knowledge and all the great moral teachers of mankind. He is even shallow and flippant upon Socrates; but he was well read in human nature, and superficially acquainted with all the learning of antiquity. In wit and sarcasm he may be compared with Voltaire, and his object was the same, — to demolish and pull down without substituting anything instead. His scepticism was universal, and extended to religion, to philosophy, and to everything venerated and ancient. His purity of style was admired by Erasmus, and his works have been translated into

most European languages. In strong contrast to the "Dialogues" of Lucian is the "City of God" by Saint Augustine, in which he demolishes with keener ridicule all the gods of antiquity, but substitutes instead the knowledge of the true God.

Thus the Romans, as well as Greeks, produced works in all departments of literature that will bear comparison with the masterpieces of modern times. And where would have been the literature of the early Church, or of the age of the Reformation, or of modern nations, had not the great original writers of Athens and Rome been our school-masters? When we further remember that their glorious literature was created by native genius, without the aid of Christianity, we are filled with amazement, and may almost be excused if we deify the reason of man. Nor, indeed, have greater triumphs of intellect been witnessed in these our Christian times than are produced among that class which is the least influenced by Christian ideas. Some of the proudest trophies of genius have been won by infidels, or by men stigmatized as such. Witness Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, Hegel, Fichte, Gibbon, Hume, Buckle. May there not be the greatest practical infidelity with the most artistic beauty and native reach of thought? Milton ascribes the most sublime intelligence to Satan and his angels on the point of rebellion against the majesty of

Heaven. A great genius may be kindled even by the fires of discontent and ambition, which may quicken the intellectual faculties while consuming the soul, and spread their devastating influence on the homes and hopes of man.

Since, then, we are assured that literature as well as art may flourish under Pagan influences, it seems certain that Christianity has a higher mission than the culture of the mind. Religious scepticism cannot be disarmed if we appeal to Christianity as the test of intellectual culture. The realm of reason has no fairer fields than those that are adorned by Pagan achievements.

AUTHORITIES.

THERE are no better authorities than the classical authors themselves, and their works must be studied in order to comprehend the spirit of ancient literature. Modern historians of Roman literature are merely critics, like Dalhmann, Schlegel, Niebuhr, Muller, Mommsen, Mure, Arnold, Dunlap, and Thompson. Nor do I know of an exhaustive history of Roman literature in the English language; yet nearly every great writer has occasional criticisms upon the subject which are entitled to respect. The Germans, in this department, have no equals.

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